Problems of COMMUNISM

The USSR and the Summit

DAVID J. DALLIN

Report on Poland

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China's "Democratic Parties"

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NO. 3 VOL VII
May-June 1958

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Problems of COMMUNISM

NUMBER 3 MAY-JUNE VOL VII 1958

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Outside the United States, *Problems of Communism* may be obtained from the nearest office of the United States Information Service. For sale within the United States by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. Price per copy: $.35. Subscription price: $1.50 a year. Additional $.50 for foreign mailing.

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Soviet Policy and the Summit

By David J. Dallin

DEEP AT THE ROOTS of the "summit conference" agitation, as at the roots of recent Soviet foreign policy in general, lies the Kremlin's conviction that the era of American supremacy has passed and the era of Soviet world leadership has arrived. Over the ages one great power has succeeded another as the dominant influence in the community of nations—Greece yielded place to Rome; Spain to Britain and Britain to the United States —the dominant nation losing its supremacy to a younger and more vigorous successor. The Soviets are now convinced that the United States, having taken over, at the end of the second World War, the position held by Britain, is now, after little more than a decade of supremacy, forced to vacate the presidial chair in favor of a power whose ascendancy would be tantamount to the triumph of socialism over capitalism.

The Russians have repeatedly asserted that the Soviet Union, not the United States, was the first country to build an atomic plant, and the same claim is made with respect to the conquest of space. "The very fact that the first socialist nation of the world was the first country to break the way into the cosmos signifies a new era in the evolution of mankind." [1]

The Soviet Union, Moscow claims, has outstripped the United States in science. Soviet missiles, says Moscow, are larger and travel farther than American missiles, and Soviet superiority in conventional as well as modern weapons is not disputed. The press also boasts that in music and the arts Soviet performance "is admired all over the world," and the successes of Soviet artistic groups abroad are triumphantly reported. It is claimed since the last Olympic games that the Soviet Union occupies first place in sports. In only one field, the economic, does the Soviet government and its press acknowledge American superiority. But even here Soviet victory "is not far away." The drive to "catch up with and outdo America in a few years in production of meat, butter and milk" is on, and the government tries to convince the Russian population that it will win the race. In regard to all other goods, Khrushchev says:

We will achieve a higher per capita production of consumer goods than in the advanced capitalist countries. We are making our calculations now, and say that not much time will pass before we will clear the highest barrier of capitalist countries, and will surpass the level of production in the United States of America. What will you say then, gentlemen? [2]

The "imperialists" in the United States, say the Soviets, are desperately trying to catch up with the Soviet Union and regain first place; but their efforts are in vain, for in every field Soviet superiority will grow and grow and grow. According to Khrushchev:

The Soviet Union will not stand still while they are catching up. We will not sit and sip tea. We, too, will be doing something so that we shall not be overtaken. So such a foolhardy policy of the imperialists can lead only to an endless armaments race with all its ensuing consequences." [3]

To one familiar with the real situation in both countries, the prospect of a hitherto backward nation like the USSR emerging in the near future as the leader of world civilization appears fantastic. Yet Moscow definitely holds this conviction, and it is a factor of major importance in our time.

Khrushchev himself no doubt believes what he says

[1] *Mezhdunarodnaia Zhizn* (International Life), Moscow, No. 3, March 1958, p. 31.

[2] *Pravda,* April 11, 1958.

[3] *Ibid.,* January 26, 1958.

Mr. Dallin is a recognized authority and writer on Soviet affairs; his recent works include The New Soviet Empire, *(1951) and* The Changing World of Soviet Russia *(1957), both published by Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut.*

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about Soviet superiority over the West. To this clever, able, but primitive man, who has had a meteoric rise to power, and who has been unbelievably successful in his inner-party as well as foreign-political operations, there would be nothing miraculous in the emergence of his country as the Demiurge of the Universe.

IN NOVEMBER 1957, during the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, an international conference of Communist leaders was held, at which the CPSU made desperate efforts to restore its leadership of the world Communist family. The prestige of the Russian party had been badly damaged by the degradation of Stalin, the Hungarian revolt, the Soviet-Polish crisis, and still smoldering Yugoslav opposition. Venerated Communist leaders in Italy, Poland, and America had expressed doubts as to Russia's right to occupy the driver's seat, and Khrushchev's group had to fight hard to silence its opponents and revive the old formula, "under the leadership of the Soviet Union." For the CPSU, its own claim to leadership implied a great pledge. The idea that the individual Communist parties had reached maturity and no longer needed guidance from the Kremlin had taken hold during the post-Stalin years. The satellite leaders had observed with interest Tito's victorious fight for the principle of "equality among the socialist nations." If Khrushchev now claimed once again for the Russian party the supreme leadership it had held in Stalin's day, he must prove its title to such leadership by demonstrating the benefits that would accrue to the socialist camp as a whole. Consequently he must display the greatest activity, dynamism, and initiative.

No sooner had the Communist conference ended than the Soviet drive for a summit conference was launched. The summit idea had been vaguely mentioned before, but now it became a real campaign. The first notes proposing it were dispatched by the Minindel on December 10, 1957, inaugurating the flow of numerous and unprecedented Bulganin letters.

As proposed by Bulganin, the summit conference agenda was to cover, in the main, issues related to atomic and other armaments. These were matters appropriately falling under the jurisdiction of the old Disarmament Commission of the United Nations, and there was no reason to expect that a summit conference would be any more successful in solving them than had the Commission. But the Soviet regime had tired not only of the Commission but even of the whole United Nations itself as an active institution. The numerical ("arithmetic") representation of the Soviet Union and its satellites in the UN, Moscow felt, was not in proportion to their newly-acquired supreme importance in world affairs.

Much as it has served as an excellent rostrum for Soviet propaganda aimed at the peoples of the world, the UN proper is not an instrument of action in Soviet eyes, because of the predominance of the American-British bloc. This predominance, say the Soviets, was a feature of the past; the Soviet Union now deserves a more prominent place than that of a small, impotent minority. As the Soviet Union sees it, a summit conference in which it would face the great powers would be more satisfactory, and to be adequate to the requirements of the new era the conference should include some of the Soviet satellites, which would ensure that the Soviet leadership would not be relegated to the unfavorable position it has held till now.

The issue which was uppermost in the Soviet leadership's mind when Moscow broached the convocation of a summit conference was not included in the officially proposed agenda; but its very omission made it more important than all the other topics put together. This issue was that of the future of Eastern Europe and East Germany. What the Soviet government badly wanted was to obtain a summit meeting of the "Big Four" from which this issue would be tabooed and therefore could not occasion an official divergence of views. Were the Western governments to agree to the taboo, their agreement would, in effect, tacitly close the door on an old dispute and virtually seal the fate of seven Eastern nations.

This unusual procedure appeared necessary because Moscow saw no other way of obtaining Western recognition of the *status quo* in the Soviet East European bloc. In earlier times Russia would simply have annexed the conquered territories and incorporated them into her empire. But the rules of Soviet empire-building and new worldwide trends now make such a procedure impossible; in our time a facade of national "sovereignty" and of "equality" with the Soviet state must be maintained. What Moscow wants, and what it has so far achieved, is a combination of outward independence and actual subordination. To make its dominance official, to seal and confirm it, to illegalize in advance any new Hungarian-type attempt, and to consolidate the bloc, an international conference, at which preservation of the *status quo* would be the agreed basis of deliberations, would be useful. As a matter of fact, during the preparatory negotiations for a summit meeting, Khrushchev has so repeatedly stressed the *status quo* formula that his intentions cannot be in doubt. Eastern Europe is taboo, he says in effect, and if you insist upon discussing it, better no summit conference at all:

We state and state again that we do not intend to meet to discuss the question of the people's democracies and the

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German question in the sense that Messrs. Eisenhower, Dulles, Adenauer conceive them.[4]

At the same time Khrushchev has left no doubt that, in the event of new popular disturbances in the people's democracies, the Soviet leadership would act exactly as it did in Hungary. He has bluntly served notice on the Western powers that:

In the event that enemies of the workers or provocateurs should attempt a *putsch* or a counterrevolution in any socialist country, then I say to you here that all the socialist countries and the armed forces of the Soviet Union are always prepared to unite, to provide help and to answer the provocation as it deserves to be answered." [5]

THE SOVIET PROGRAM for a summit conference includes a number of suggestions concerning the testing of atomic weapons, disarmament, and reciprocal withdrawal of military forces from eastern and western Europe. It would be wrong not to give weight to the economic reasons for these proposals. The Soviet economy, despite all its successes, must cope with many difficulties, and new problems are arising. The West has so often stressed the peculiar ability of the Soviet government to pump out of its economy the funds needed for armaments that the other side of the picture has been obscured. Certainly the Soviet Union is at an advantage in being able to depress living standards to a level impossible in other countries, thereby creating funds for expansion of "heavy industry," for armaments, loans to foreign countries, and weapons for friends and sattellites. But even such a rigid system has its limits. In addition, lack of young manpower, together with the growing demands of certain strata of the population for better living conditions, adds to the difficulties. The Soviet government, too, has crucial budget problems. It must try to reduce the cost of armaments.

The Soviet government will reduce its armaments budget, however, only if this can be done while still maintaining the ratio of its military power to that of the West—and, in certain fields, its already achieved margin of superiority. The emphasis in the race with the West has shifted with the years from a purely economic competition to one in arms and forces as well To outdo America in these fields is more than a principle; it is a vow and a commandment.

A partial withdrawal of Soviet forces from Eastern Europe would save billions of rubles, and this saving is one of the aims of Moscow's reciprocal "demilitarization" scheme. But the balance between Soviet and Western power in Europe would also change critically in Russia's favor the moment such a program were fulfilled and the American army and air force were removed from the continent—which points to the second aim of the Soviet proposal. In the West European vacuum that would be created by the withdrawal (because France is bogged down in Africa and West Germany is still too weak militarily), pro-Soviet (though not Russian) forces or trends could get the upper hand.

West Berlin might well become the first victim of the new imbalance of power. This small island in the Soviet-German sea, with only two million inhabitants, could swiftly be invaded from East Berlin and since no effective local armed resistance could be deployed, it might be annexed to the DDR (German Democratic Republic) before Bonn, Washington, Paris, and London could react. In that case, the rest of West Germany would undoubtedly be the next, and decisive, target of operations. Elimination of West Germany from the Western alliance, above all from NATO, is the primary aim of Soviet foreign policy. The high esteem in which Germany has always been held by Moscow and Germany's present decisive role in European defense make the Bonn government the first target of Soviet diplomatic and power drives.

THE GERMAN ISSUE reappears in different guise as the kernel of the Rapacki plan, another item on the agenda of the proposed summit conference. The idea of the Rapacki plan is to create a European "zone" in which no nuclear weapons would be stored, the zone to embrace Poland, Czechoslovakia, and both parts of Germany. Named after its initiator, Poland's Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki, the plan has been presented to the world as a non-Soviet project, though it received prompt Soviet blessing after its announcement.

Poland would like atomic bases to be as far as possible from her borders—an understandable and legitimate desire since, however small the protection afforded by European distances in an era of jets and missiles, there would still be a certain amount of comfort in the knowledge that the nearest A- and H-bomb stores were hundreds of miles away. Poland wants the zone to stretch to the western borders of Germany, 500 or 600 miles from Warsaw. But what about the area to the east? Why should not the zone extend 600 miles in the other direction, that is, as far as Kursk or even Moscow? After all, the Soviet border—and a possible A-bomb base—is only 60 air miles from Warsaw. Would it not be more logical for the Polish government to demand a "deatomized" zone with Poland in the geographic center?

To ask this question is to cast doubt on Poland's role as the initiator of the Rapacki plan. During the prepara-

[4] *Pravda*, January 26, 1958.
[5] *New York Times*, April 9, 1958.

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tory stage, when Warsaw was discussing the plan with Prague and Berlin, it had also, as a matter of course, been in consultation with Moscow. Was it Warsaw's or Moscow's idea? Did the Polish foreign minister have to accept, *contre coeur,* the Soviet thesis that Soviet A-bombs are not dangerous and only American and British bombs must be kept out?

There is another reason for assuming that the Rapacki plan is actually a Gromyko plan. Revealing atomic secrets and supplying atomic weapons to allies are matters that bother not only Washington and London, but Moscow, too. Sooner or later a decision will have to be made by the Soviet government, and an answer will have to be given to inquiries on the part of satellite military leaders and general staffs about A-weapons for their armed forces. This is a delicate issue for Moscow. Less than two years ago Poland threw out a Russian marshal and his aides; in Hungary a Soviet-trained army turned over its weapons to a revolutionary populace. Should Moscow, then, entrust the ultimate weapon to potential adversaries? Every possible answer to this question is fraught with complications. The best solution would be a "de-nuclearized zone" from which all foreign troops would also be removed. This solution, however, suits Soviet interests better than it does those of Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Finally, the Rapacki plan would rest upon the "solemn pledge" of the A-powers to comply with the rules for the "zone" and keep nuclear weapons out of it. A high degree of international confidence is therefore an obvious precondition of the plan; but in view of the rapid and unpredictable changes that might occur in the highest echelons of the Moscow government, acceptance of the Polish plan involves a great deal of chance-taking.

More reliable than such a "solemn pledge" would be international inspection and supervision of partial or total disarmament. So far, however, the Soviet attitude in this respect has not been encouraging. Moscow has promised more than once to make inspection possible, but the promises have been unclear and evasive. Actually, the Soviet Union knows more about the armaments status of the West than vice versa, and if disarmament is agreed upon, Moscow would have a multitude of means of its own for observing and judging Western compliance with the prescribed rules. On the other hand, were it to agree to effective control, it would have to permit far-reaching contacts between Western representatives and the Russian population both in regard to armaments and in general. The political climate of the Soviet Union, its police system, and general rigidity almost preclude such a degree of rapprochement with the non-Soviet world. The Soviet statements that have been put forward publicly on the issue of international inspection are, therefore, unconvincing. Khrushchev, for example, said on April 10, 1958:

> **They propose control. We are for control, but they want to establish a kind of control that would mean interference in the internal affairs of our state, infringement of our sovereignty. In short, set them at the table and they will put their feet on the table. . . . The ruling circle of the Western powers say: let us agree that our planes will fly over your country and your planes over ours. But we don't want to fly over your country and don't want even the smell of you over our country.[6]**

Khrushchev was even more frank at a diplomatic reception at the Indian Embassy in Moscow on January 27. When you visit a person whom you do not know well, he said, "you may get into the hall. You may get into the parlor or even the dining room. But you do not go into the bedroom." [7] To insist upon an inaccessible "bedroom" is tantamount to rejecting control, and to reject control is to reject disarmament.

WHAT THE SOVIET UNION can expect to gain from a summit conference is more or less obvious. As the initiator of the first top-level East-West conference since Geneva, and as the formulator of its proposed agenda, it expects, first, a substantial gain in prestige. Second, it expects at least tacit recognition of the Soviet orbit in Eastern Europe, including East Germany. Third, as the culmination of its current worldwide propaganda drive, it expects to pressure the West into agreeing to the cessation of nuclear tests, which will serve to improve its own position in the nuclear arms field as compared with the United States. Fourth, it counts upon achieving an opening wedge toward the withdrawal of Anglo-American forces from Europe.

What the West can expect from a summit conference is less certain. If, in defiance of the Soviet taboo mentioned earlier, it solemnly announces a program for Eastern Europe along the lines hitherto adhered to, the possibly heartening impact of the announcement will be coupled with a feeling of discouragement at the obvious difficulty of translating such words into deeds. If reunification of Germany is stressed, moreover, the Soviets certainly will not allow the subject to come under serious discussion. Consequently, control of space and inspection as part of a disarmament program appear to be the only important problems that could be taken up seriously. Here, too, however, a successful outcome would depend entirely on Moscow's willingness to budge from its present position, and so far it has given no indication that it is prepared to do so.

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[6] *Pravda,* April 11, 1958.

[7] *New York Times,* January 29, 1958.

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Report on Poland

EDITORS' NOTE: In trying to appraise the contemporary scene in Poland, one is reminded of the title of one of Aldous Huxley's novels, *Time Must Have a Stop.* For the purpose of analysis, it would indeed be helpful if time were to stop, assuring the observer that the situation he describes will be the same by the time his words reach the reader. Yet history is seldom so accommodating, and the history of post-October Poland offers no exception to the rule. When the articles constituting the present report were being written, it still seemed as if the major gains of the October upheaval would be preserved. But by the time the issue went to press, new shadows were darkening the "Polish road to socialism." The power of the workers' councils—that classic proletarian institution which sprang up spontaneously during the October revolt—has now been reduced to a minimum. Strikes, uneasily tolerated in the past eighteen months, have been forbidden by Gomulka in language disturbingly reminiscent of Stalinist jargon. Press censorship has been tightened, and "revisionist" writers have been served notice that they must curb their criticisms and demands—or keep silent.

Nevertheless, the articles offered below remain pertinent to present-day circumstances. For the ferment and the dilemmas engendered by Poland's release from the Stalinist nightmare are rooted in historical and geopolitical factors—such as traditional animosity toward Russia, the precarious location of the country, and the nationalistic spirit of the Polish CP—which cannot be undone or legislated out of existence. It is safe to predict that the course of Polish communism will continue to be as checkered as it has been in the past year and a half: that Gomulka, mindful of the ever-present threat of Soviet intervention and bent on the preservation of one-party rule in conditions of relative freedom, will feel bound to restrain the intellectuals even more, yet will find it neither possible nor desirable to silence them altogether (Mr. Jelenski's article); that Polish youth will continue to vacillate between cynicism and optimism (Mr. Sherman's article); that the Polish economy will be rent by contradictions (Mr. Lewins' article); and that the peasants will continue their uneasy existence, benefiting from the regime's current agricultural policy, yet unsure of its duration (Mr. Przybyla's article). In sum, Poland's unique experiment will go on, an unending source of frustration to its leaders, a thorn in the side of the Kremlin, and an object of interest and sympathy for the rest of the world.

Revisionism — Pragmatism — Gomulkaism

By K. A. Jelenski

IN TODAY'S POLAND it is difficult to define the precise limits and scope of "revisionism". The Polish phenomenon as a whole involves dissent, heresy and heterogeneity; it is therefore, in itself, a revisionist factor within the Communist bloc. The Soviets, for whom the expression of non-orthodox views in a Communist country is almost unimaginable, cannot fail to be disturbed by a Poland which includes not only a Gomulka but also a Cardinal Wyszynski, revolutionary intellectuals and diehard nationalists, recalcitrant Poznan workers and a remarkably "tame" police. As for the great majority of Poles themselves, they remain stubbornly anti-Communist and accept the Gomulka regime as their own for nationalist reasons. Obviously, there is a great deal of ambiguity in this situation. The fact remains, however, that the Polish revolt is the work of Communists, and the new tendencies of Polish communism are the most influential force at work in the country.

Mr. Jelenski is a Polish poet and journalist living in Paris. He has written extensively on Polish affairs for European and American journals, including Encounter *(London),* Saturn *(Paris), and* Partisan Review *(New York).*

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"Gomulkaism" itself—simplified for the purposes of analysis—includes both "revisionist" and "pragmatic" elements. In this broad sense, the controversy within the party between the revisionist intellectual and the practical technician merely reflects the country's fundamental dilemma. Here, too, however, it is difficult to draw a clear line of demarcation. The purest "revisionist"—the *Po Prostu* rebel who urged that the state power be replaced by workers' councils—is open to pragmatic argumentation, if only to extricate Poland from the Stalinist economic debacle. On the other hand, the most hardheaded technician is ready to accept at least one of the major demands of revisionism: the need for economic decentralization, which must, in the last analysis, imply some form of workers' control.[1]

In the USSR, of course, Gomulka himself would normally be considered a revisionist. For practical reasons, he has suspended agricultural collectivization, decentralized industry, and compromised with the Church. Moreover, during the Eighth Plenum (October 1956) he clearly proclaimed that "we have no right to assert that all the principles of Marxism-Leninism must remain unchanged at each stage of the evolution of humanity." But Gomulka, it should be noted, never fails to defer to the curious prudery of the Soviets, who have introduced a sort of Victorian hypocrisy into the discussion of ideas. Accustomed to the exigencies of power, the Soviet Communists are shocked less by what is done than by what is said. In Poland, they accept—if they must—a partial return to private ownership and the influence of the Church, but they cannot brook a challenge to Leninist theory or a criticism of "socialist realism". A quotation from Bernstein embarrasses them as might a vulgar word in a salon. Thus Gomulka, who must be rated a convinced Communist, takes care to buttress his arguments by citing chapter and verse. His pragmatism makes him a "revisionist" in deed, but he remains verbally orthodox.

The Essentials of "Gomulkaism"

Gomulka's position reflects the curious contrast between ideas and institutions in Poland. The Polish intellectuals rebelled against Stalinism in 1954. By 1956, the implications of their revolt were going far beyond an effort to adapt the party "line" to the economic and social contradictions which had appeared in the Communist bloc. While ideas thus moved toward a relative degree of freedom, the institutions (*i.e.*, the one-party regime based on total police power and a sacrosanct dogma) remained intact, for reasons which are rooted in the country's geographical situation. The suppression of the Hungarian revolution in the autumn of 1956 was a tragic reminder that no country in the Soviet bloc can transgress certain limits. Thus, many of the new Polish ideas were partially muted and sterilized by the inability of the Poles to translate them into action.

Nevertheless, viewed in the light of the immobility of the Soviet party, the entire Polish United Workers' Party—with the exception of a small faction of Stalinists—could be taxed with "revisionism." There were, to be sure, marked differences of outlook between Gomulka and the intellectuals who had led the fight against Stalinism between 1954 and 1956, but the following propositions were common ground.

1) The real facts of Polish life must not be falsified. Policy must flow from the actual situation, not from an *a priori* conception of the world. Thus, it is no longer possible to say: "Because the proletariat is in power, because the means of production are nationalized, everybody is happy and the Polish workers have a satisfactory standard of living." On the contrary: "The means of production are nationalized, and that's a good thing. It is even the necessary condition for the transformation of society. But the standard of living is low and the party must study the real situation objectively in order to remedy this."

2) Art, literature and scientific research must remain free, and this freedom shall not be limited by ideological censorship, but only by an *ad hoc* political censorship to the extent required by the delicate "international" situation.

3) Marxism should be considered a flexible, evolving doctrine, into which certain contributions from "bourgeois" sociology and "capitalist" economics can be integrated.

The union which formed around Gomulka in October 1956 was based on these principles. For the majority of Poles, Gomulka symbolized resistance to Russia and the hoped-for end of a detested regime. From the very beginning, however, there was a certain ambiguity in the situation. The left-wing "revisionists" hoped that Gomulka—who remained an intruder in the eyes of the Natolinists (*i.e.*, the Stalinists) and most of the members of the party apparatus—would declare himself on their side. Yet despite Gomulka's affinity with the revisionists, there was nothing in his personality or his history that would put him squarely in their camp.

Stubborn, honest, courageous, with great practical intelligence and little interest in ideological innovation, Gomulka was, in a sense, the real forerunner of "national communism." Having survived the dissolution of the Polish Communist Party and the assassination of its leaders by Stalin in 1938, he was both a veteran

[1] For an interesting definition of revisionism, see Jerzy Szacki, *Po Prostu* (Warsaw), February 1, 1957.

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and a victim of the revolutionary struggle. Hence, he has often been compared to Tito and Nagy. Both the latter, however, were trained in Moscow during the total ascendancy of Stalinism, whereas Gomulka had never left Poland. Moreover, Tito belonged, as we tend to forget, to the extreme left of the Comintern, and it was his "leftist" deviation on the international level which led to his conflict with the Kremlin. Gomulka, on the other hand, took seriously the slogan of a Polish "way to socialism," launched between 1945 and 1948. In April 1947, he wrote:

"We have chosen our own Polish road of development which we have named Popular Democracy. In following this road, and under these conditions, the dictatorship of a single party is not essential, it is even superflous . . . Poland can follow her own way and she is doing precisely that . . .[2]

Forced collectivization particularly aroused Gomulka's strong opposition. Thus, if these terms have any meaning at all, he was rather a "deviationist of the right."

In 1948, having fallen into disgrace, he was accused of every possible crime. He defended himself with courage and dignity before the Central Committee in 1949: "I am going to talk at considerable length today, because I know that this is the last time. . . ." And further: "I do not accept any criticism of my conduct during the occupation." [3] Perhaps it was his imperviousness to the doubts of a Rubashov that saved him from the fate of Kostov and Rajk. The Polish Stalinists avoided bringing Gomulka to trial. He left prison without having succumbed to the "logic of confession," and this certainly was one of the factors which made the October movement possible.

Dogmas Under Fire

Even before Gomulka's remarkable resurrection from prison to power, the left-wing "revisionist" intellectuals were developing the arguments which underlay the principles listed above. During the general "demystification" which became permissible after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, they attacked dogmatism and demanded that science, literature and art be freed from the tyranny of politics. Thus Leszek Kolakowski, the most brilliant of the young Marxist philosophers, explained in the September 1956 issue of *Nowe Drogi,* the party's theoretical organ, that since Marxism represented truth and human reasoning would always revert to truth, Communists had nothing to fear from intellectual freedom! As for Stalin, "he was not a Marxist and did not represent Marxism," said the weekly *Po Prostu.* Here we have a characteristic tactic of the Polish Communist intellectual: he invariably professes respect for Marxism, but in fact his attitude is close to that of Jean-Paul Sartre, who once described Marxism in *Les Temps Modernes* as the "common cultural heritage of the Left." The viewpoint of the Polish intellectual, then, is akin to the anti-dogmatic attitude postulated by so many heretics in the West. Again to quote *Po Prostu*:

Although we consider historical materialism, Marxism, the most fruitful tendency in the social sciences, we see no sense in the sectarian attitude which sneers at all discoveries—often capital ones—in other schools of thought. We think that Marxism should be submitted to the same methods of scientific verification and control as any other discipline . . . we must never cease to confront it with the facts, revising and developing it whenever necessary.[4]

In short, Polish Marxists have undertaken a critique of Marxism which would not surprise us if it came from Sidney Hook. Despite the predictions of Marx, socialist construction has been initiated in the economically backward, rather than the most advanced, countries. It follows that certain Marxist dogmas must be rejected: the "law" of working class pauperization under capitalism, the Marxist theory of crises, views on the nature of imperialism, technical progress and the mechanism of proletarian power, *etc.* What the Polish intellectual retains as valid in Marxism does not differ essentially from what has survived in modern sociological and economic theories:

If we remove from Marxism the academicism and propaganda of the past period, there remain certain elements—an analytical method, an economic and cultural discipline—which many non-Communist thinkers and the scientific community in general recognize as valuable contributions to the human inheritance.[5]

Communism had been defined as an arduous upward struggle towards a mythical tomorrow. This utopian conception has been rejected in Poland. Socialism must stand or fall on what it can contribute today. "For our generation," wrote R. Turski in *Po Prostu* (No. 43, 1956), "the fight for socialism is not an abstract and distant goal . . . for future generations to achieve. Its success is the essential condition for the realization of our own present interests." And this refusal to sacrifice the present for a quasi-mythical future involves the rejection of the idea that history is a fixed process

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[2] Nowe Drogi (Warsaw, theoretical journal of the Polish party), April 1947.

[3] *Ibid.,* November 1949.

[4] *Po Prostu,* No. 48, 1956.

[5] M. Czerwinski, *Przeglad Kulturalny* (Warsaw), No. 44, 1956.

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leading inevitably to a known and definite end. Jan Kott summarized this historical determinism in openly hostile terms:

All that accelerates the historical process is likened to progress; all that retards it, to reaction. This is the fallacy of the Procrustean bed. History must be distorted to produce the next stage as quickly as possible. No price is too high to pay for this acceleration of the historical process.[6]

Before the revolt of the intellectuals, Communist dogma proclaimed that history's "inexorable" course was predetermined by Soviet experience, as well as by Soviet interests. The only criterion by which a society's progress could be measured was the degree of its adaptation to the Soviet archetype. Today, however, the Poles have replaced the dogma with the principle of the plurality of roads leading to socialism. As a consequence, independence and national sovereignty not only appear compatible with the building of a socialist society, but they actually constitute an indispensable element in the process. Thus, in the words of one Polish writer:

If previously it was said that only socialism guarantees independence and sovereignty, we must now add that only sovereignty and independence can guarantee the building of socialism.[7]

Above all, the doctrinaire approach is discarded. In the Stalinist era, neither facts nor experience nor the actual consequences of decisions counted, so long as the decisions were theoretically "correct." Today, Gomulka's appeal for an empirical approach is echoed by most of the intellectuals:

Twice we have learned a catechism by rote. Today we reject chapter and verse, we've done with the bibles. We have arms, we have brains, we want to build socialism in Poland. To build it and not to enshrine it in dogma and myth.[8]

As for the left-wingers, they went beyond the rejection of dogmatism in general—to criticism of the dogmas themselves. Thus, Jan Kott denounced the theory which equated the building of socialism with forced industrialization: "Even the name of socialism had been so disfigured by Stalinism that we had come to believe that it meant a violent and extremely costly system of industrialization in economically backward countries." Similarly, the young writers of *Po Prostu* denounced the utilization of man as an "element of the productive forces" which serve the "economic interests of the state." The meaning of socialism, they insisted, was inseparable from the fate of the individual in society, and the crime of Stalinism was precisely to put a socialist label on "this process of primitive accumulation which Marx attributed, in his historical scheme, to capitalism." [9] They also exposed the fundamental sophism according to which it sufficed to nationalize the means of production in order to create a socialist order:

So now we have had our revolution and the means of production are in the hands of the people . . . The capitalists have been expropriated. But this has in no way produced socialist conditions.[10]

We have briefly summarized the points on which Gomulka found himself in agreement with the more rebellious elements in the Polish party. What, then, constitutes "revisionism" from Gomulka's point of view? This is a moot question, for the limits of orthodoxy in the Polish situation are difficult to establish. Indeed, they sometimes seem to bear out the truth of Jerzy Szacki's contention, quoted above, that what is said is less important than the man who says it. The following is an interesting example: A young Polish economist, Bielinek, writing in *Zycie Gospodarcze* (Economic Life) quoted a long passage from an article by Adam Schaff, the quasi-official Marxist philosopher who is closely associated with *Polityka,* the "Gomulkaist" weekly known for its "anti-revisionism." Whereupon A. Werblan, a collaborator of *Polityka,* attacked Bielinek, carelessly attributing to him the quotation from Schaff. And it was precisely in this quotation that he saw a "serious attempt to revise Leninism"!

Marxism vs. Humanism

There is no doubt, however, that real differences exist between Gomulka and the "revisionists" whom he so vigorously attacked during the party's Ninth Plenum, in May 1957. On this occasion, Gomulka singled out the brilliant young philosopher, Leszek Kolakowski, whose theses on democracy within the party, the workers' councils, *etc.,* he rejected on frankly practical grounds.

Here, indeed, we have the heart of the matter. The essential difference between Gomulka and the revisionists—who are often closer in spirit to Rosa Luxembourg than to Lenin—is that the revisionists are, in fact, opposed to the dictatorship of the party apparatus, while Gomulka considers this dictatorship essential for two related reasons. First of all, the end of the dictatorship would provoke Soviet intervention. Secondly, only

[6] *Przeglad Kulturalny,* No. 36, 1956.
[7] A. Braun, *Nowa Kultura* (Warsaw), No. 44, 1956.
[8] B. Brozdowski, *Zycie Literackie* (Warsaw), No. 44, 1956.
[9] *Po Prostu,* Nos. 44 and 47, 1956.
[10] J. Roszko, *Zycie Literackie,* No. 43, 1956.

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the menace of Soviet intervention allows Gomulka to maintain the dictatorship of the party. Seen in this perspective, the famous Polish "reason of state" is a two-edged sword. It serves, on the one hand, to maintain a tacit agreement, a compromise, between the government and the country and, on the other hand, to perpetuate the power of the party.

The principal thesis of the revisionists is one that could not be openly expressed even in the amazing conditions of freedom which existed in Poland towards the end of 1956 and the beginning of 1957. It implicitly recognizes that the totalitarianism of the Stalinist era is the result, not merely of an individual's desire for power, but of the "Blanquist" conception of the party adopted by Lenin about 1901. It was this conception which led logically to the total "absorption" of society by the state and brought the Soviet system to its present condition. By making a dogma of the party's ideological monopoly, Lenin prepared the ground for a ruling apparatus which would incarnate the so-called "objective" aspirations of society. For the revisionists, the relationship between Leninism and Stalinism is clear.

Kolakowski, who most sharply expresses the revisionist viewpoint, begins by attacking the teleological interpretation of history. In his essay, "On the Correctness of the Principle, The End Justifies the Means," he writes:

The concept of communism as the goal of social action commonly implies, in the practical thinking of the Communists if not in their manifest declarations, a persistent eschatological hypothesis, namely, that daily life can be treated as a means towards a single, definite and inevitable end[11]

But communism, he continues, should mean not only the end but the movement which leads toward that end. Thus, the old bugbear of "necessity" is dispelled, and values are rehabilitated: "Moral virtues are worth acquiring, for their own sake, even if no particular advantage can be obtained from them."

It is not astonishing that Kolakowski, in a later essay, comes to recognize the value of the "categorical imperative":

According to Kant, every human being should be treated as an end in himself; to take this as a principle of collective life does not of course mean avoiding situations where one must resort to painful means, but it does obviate a cynical attitude with respect to such situations.

Another fundamental — and related — thesis of Kolakowski's is that it is impossible to infer a moral obligation from any historical necessity:

[11] *Przeglad Kulturalny,* May 3-9, 1956.

Gomulka and *Raison d'Etat*

Whence today still the old question: "Of what use is the alliance with the USSR to Poland?" Simply so that Poland be able to exist, live, and develop. So that none of its citizens be burned in crematoria and liquidated in concentration camps, so that we not be thrown out of our own houses and our own land. Has so much time passed since those days that we are to forget them already?

In the last few years our life has been full of errors and lies. But among other truths there was also the great truth voiced by our party, by the people's government, and by all patriots—the truth of the necessity of the alliance with the Soviet Union. We have been proclaiming this truth, we are proclaiming it now, and we shall keep on proclaiming it not only because we love socialism, but also because we love our country, our homeland, our people—because we love Poland.

—"Gomulka Replies to Questions of Poznan Workers," Trybuna Ludu (Warsaw), June 7, 1957.

Alleged historical necessity cannot exempt one from the moral duty of fighting against a governmental system, a doctrine and social conditions which he considers contemptible and inhuman.[12]

Kolakowski does not believe in the inevitable advent of an ideal society. For him, the "tomorrows which sing" are utopian. Utopia, of course, is worth struggling for, but he does not seem to believe that a radical transformation of human relations is possible. Such an eventuality, in any case, is too distant to figure in a political program. The extent of his disenchantment, as well as the importance of his ideas in the present Polish situation, are well illustrated in statements like the following:

At given moments, certain truths are as difficult to comprehend as to ignore. Thus, we are incapable of transporting Poland to the British Isles and of acquiring with one blow those democratic liberties which tradition and geography have denied us. But it is as difficult to convince our people that this is impossible as it is to reverse the order of nature and accomplish this miraculous change.[13]

From the careful pragmatism of Gomulka to the democratic skepticism of Kolakowski, there is a considerable ideological range. But the left revisionists

[12] L. Kolakowski, "Responsibility and History," *Nowa Kultura,* September 1954.

[13] *Ibid.*

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generally supported Gomulka's economic program, which is essentially the Polish version of a rather general reaction against Stalinist economic slavery. Having broken out of the totalitarian "closed circuit" economy, the Poles, like the Yugoslavs and the Hungarians, discovered that men work well only in a social system which makes some appeal to their preferences as workers and consumers, and that this system can vary considerably in different occupations, particularly in industry and agriculture.

Economic Experimentation

Perhaps the greatest influence on the development of the Polish "economic model" was the classic study of Professor Oskar Lange, "On the Economic Theory of Socialism," published some twenty years ago in America. Lange, a well-known international scholar, enjoyed a certain prestige among the independent Left in the United States until 1945, when he gave up his American citizenship and accepted the post of Polish Ambassador to Washington. Recalled to Poland, he served the Stalinist regime as an economic expert. Paradoxically, however, it was only in 1956 that he was able to play an effective role, a role shaped precisely by his past experience of intellectual freedom. Lange's book argues the possibility of reconciling a socialist economy with a free market.

In January 1957, when the Polish government created an Economic Council charged with laying the foundations of a new system, the Polish "revolutionary" economists like Brus and Lipinski proposed to make the market the basis of the economic mechanism. They were called "economists of law and value," because they urged a modification of the system of central planning in such manner as to allow prices to find their own levels. In addition to the restoration of the supply-demand mechanism, the essential principles of the new economic "model" are the following:

A central plan is devised to coordinate and correct the market economy. This plan is to be based, however, not on a formal balance-sheet, as in the Stalinist system, but on a thoroughgoing analysis of economic facts. Enterprises are relatively *independent,* the idea being to create industrial units which would have the flexibility but not the aggressiveness of capitalist enterprises. Plant revenues thus become a major consideration. The personnel are allowed to share in these revenues in order to increase material incentives and raise productivity. Ideally, enterprises should be allowed to determine their production goals and their prices within a market which would become increasingly free.

These principles met with general agreement. However, their very generality concealed an underlying conflict, which was particularly exacerbated by the issue of the workers' councils. The latter sprang up spontaneously after the Poznan revolt in June 1956; they appeared at once as a natural reaction of the oppressed working class—a posthumous victory of Rosa Luxembourg over Lenin—and as an imitation of what the Poles believed to be the function of the workers' councils in Yugoslavia. The "left" intellectuals of the party seized upon the idea of worker self-management as a political panacea. "This movement . . . certainly represented a sort of manifestation of the working class struggle against the managers, the new elite," wrote *Po Prostu* in January 1957.

The laws establishing the functions of the councils, adopted between November 1956 and January 1957, naturally disappointed the "revisionists." Not only was there no question of conferring political power on these latter-day "soviets" (this was excluded in advance) but their economic sphere proved to be singularly limited, mainly because the whole conception of the councils was denounced by the "pragmatists." Economists, technicians, bureaucrats—all were unanimous in warning that the workers' councils would become an obstacle to production. Even Peter Wiles, the young and brilliant economist from Oxford, brought no grist to the revisionist mill when he replied to an inquiry from *Po Prostu*:

The difference between a capitalist and a socialist management of a factory is minor . . . it is more important to produce necessities in an efficient fashion than to have a good social structure in a factory.[14]

On this question, of course, Gomulka was squarely on the side of the "pragmatists." During the Ninth Plenum, he accused the revisionists of wishing to make the workers' councils the "owners" of the plants. This, he said, would create "all the phenomena which characterize the capitalist economy, but with even more evil consequences." The capitalist can and indeed must think of investments, whereas "the workers or collective owners of a factory will always tend, because of their low living standards, to increase their own wages without worrying about investments." The entire debate showed that the conception of "soviets" remained a nightmarish one—after the Hungarian uprising—for all post-Stalinist governments. Gomulka ended by proposing extremely limited tasks for these dangerous organizations: they should "combat waste" in the national economy, they should be "informed" of all

[14] *Po Prustu,* No. 16, April 21, 1957.

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the production problems, above all they should fight against theft and corruption "which costs the economy millions of *zlotys*." This program is reminiscent of certain capitalist industrial relations schemes which attempt to increase the "participation" of workers in factory life.

The Delicate Balance

Until the elections of January 1957, the intellectuals, acting in the name of the party's democratic Left, were the surest and most useful allies of Gomulka. Their passionate appeals, the hopes that they expressed, the complete freedom with which they treated the thorniest arguments, contributed a great deal to the Polish "plebiscite" for Gomulka. But Gomulka's domestic policy is determined with a view to his "margin of safety." In order to conserve his independence *vis-à-vis* the USSR, he has had to defend himself against his worst enemies, the Polish Stalinists, who represent a vested interest group rather than an ideological tendency. He has fought them subtly and handled them with care. It would seem that each forward step towards real independence had to be compensated by a concession, on another level, to the Polish Communists who enjoy the confidence of the Kremlin. Thus each measure separating the Stalinists a little further from power seems to be balanced by "warnings" to the most reformist of the Communists—principally, that is, to the revisionist intellectuals.

A Polish Writer on Communist Crimes

We know as all know: there is a problem—as old as the world—of crime and punishment. There is little room to consider problems a la Proust where massacres on a Shakespearean scale are committed. If there are murdered people, there must be murderers. Where there are people falsely sentenced, there are false witnesses. Is it possible to hang a lock of silence over a history whose echo still lives on in each and everyone of us?

I have nothing against a penetrating and *truthful* analysis, against a *real* and careful solution of party problems . . . nothing, that is, as long as we master the art of frankness and objectivity. Our nation has suffered enough. It knows life. It does not like fictitious conflicts—neither in life nor in literature. For if we have all been so good and innocent, why has life been so bad?

—Jerzy Piorkowski, "Tragic Thoughts"
Nowa Kultura *(Warsaw), No. 35, 1957.*

In April 1957, at the apex of his power after the triumphant spring elections, Gomulka forced Staszewski, one of the partisans of the October revolution, to resign from the Warsaw Committee. Another man of the Left, Matwin, was removed as editor-in-chief of *Trybunu Ludu*. On the other hand, there are no Stalinists in the key posts of the new State Council or in the new government. Zenon Nowak, one of the leaders of the Natolin group, and Gomulka's sworn enemy, who during the Seventh Session of the Central Committee in July 1956 openly launched anti-semitic slogans inspired by Khrushchev, would seem to be an exception, since he remains at his post as ministerial vice-president. But this post has been deprived of all power. Gomulka's compromising tendencies have been felt most keenly in the intellectual sector. Leon Kruczkowski, author of "Julius and Ethel," a pitiable melodrama exploiting the Rosenberg tragedy, the writer whom the poet Jastrun recently called the last "social realist" in Poland, has been nominated to the State Council. And the first official internal bulletin of the Central Committee after the elections proclaimed the necessity of a fight on two fronts: against the Stalinists and against the anarchistic elements of the intelligentsia.

Despite these warnings, one cannot say that the general tone of the Polish literary press markedly changed between October 1956 and September 1957. However, the party leadership has reestablished the authority of censorship. This is nothing like the old Stalinist censorship: it starts from a "strategic" viewpoint rather than an ideological one; and it now appears not as an instrument of a dogma but as an expression of caution inspired by "reasons of state." The little Torquemadas have changed into little Machiavellis. There even exists a certain complicity between the journalist or the writer and the censor, who claims to share the same views which he must, alas, prohibit, for the sake of safeguarding the future. A joke which circulated in Warsaw on the difference between Yugoslavia and Poland illustrates this situation rather well: whereas in Yugoslavia one can criticize everything that is Russian and nothing that is Yugoslav, in Poland one can attack anything Polish but nothing that is Russian. The fact remains, nevertheless, that this censorship engenders reflexes of self-censorship in the writer. Thus during 1957 a new conformism appears, subtle and difficult to situate. As long as Gomulka's regime is in office in Poland there is no question of a return to Stalinism or even of imposing a uniform theory of "Polish socialism." The problem of a writer in a totalitarian state is simple: either he continues to write, giving body and soul to the dictatorship, or he is silent with the risks and perils that this entails. But Poland

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is no longer a totalitarian state. "I believe that we are moving towards a 'Sanacja' of the Left," a Polish writer recently said to this author, alluding to the prewar government of Pilsudski's successors. Nevertheless, it is quite difficult—even for a born conformist—to find the correct "tone" in an authoritarian country which is governed by a single party and situated in the Communist bloc, yet still clings to substantial freedom of expression.

THE POLISH LEFT revisionist found his positions faithfully reflected in the weekly *Po Prostu,* which was suspended by the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party on October 2, 1957. Protesting against this return to totalitarian methods, young men and women rioted in Warsaw on the anniversary of the "October Movement." On October 16, eight members of the editorial committee of *Po Prostu* were expelled from the party, and six others were officially censured. During the following month censorship became more rigorous, and various measures were directed against the intellectuals. *Europa,* a western-oriented literary magazine which had been authorized to appear under the direction of Jerzy Andrzejewski, was prohibited on November 4, when its first issue had already gone to press. At the same time, the government suppressed the liberal weeklies *Ziemia i Morze* in Szczecin, *Kronika* in Lodz, and *Przemiany* in Kotowice. The Socialist youth weekly *Sztandar Mlodych* was forced to change its staff, and various other writers in press and radio were dismissed. In protest against these measures, several of the most famous writers in Poland resigned from the party: the poets Jerzy Andrzejewski, Pawel Hertz, Mieczyslaw Jastrun, Adam Wazyk, and the excellent literary critic Jan Kott—all members of the editorial board of *Kuznica,* the first Marxist weekly founded in Poland after the war. This is the first time that intellectuals have left the party of their own accord inside the Communist bloc.

We must not deduce from this "toughening" that Gomulka's Poland has lost its unique character within the Soviet orbit. On the contrary: Poland remains the only country of the bloc which has succeeded in preserving a considerable degree of harmony between the "legal country"—the power apparatus and the institutions which express its will—and the "real country," the economic, social, political, intellectual and religious forces of the nation. Poland alone continues to represent an experiment in compromise between the forces of freedom and the regime, a tacit compromise concluded in order to safeguard certain common interests against the Soviet menace. It would be absurd, then, to analyze the Polish situation without reference to the evolution of the entire Soviet orbit.

The present policy of the USSR with respect to the other countries of the Communist bloc was set forth in the declaration issued by the twelve Communist parties now in power, during the Moscow meeting of November 1957. This declaration approves most of the Khrushchevian theses on ideology and on the domestic and foreign policies of the Communist parties. Nevertheless, we know that it was not adopted without a tenacious opposition from the Polish delegation, an opposition which won on a number of points. Thus the passage concerning the Hungarian revolution was reduced from several pages of lucubrations on the theme of "reactionary provocation" to a single paragraph. Likewise, it would seem that Gomulka successfully opposed the foundation of a new Communist International. Moreover, in the theses concerning gradualism in agricultural collectivization, as well as in the question of the struggle against "dogmatism," there are unmistakable traces of Gomulka's thinking, as developed during the Tenth Plenum of the Polish party.

The Moscow declaration, with its recognition of the supremacy of the USSR, was a retreat from the policy pursued by Khrushchev since the Twentieth Congress, which accepted the principle of "national roads to socialism." Obviously, Moscow has been ruminating over the lessons of Polish events and, above all, of the Hungarian revolution. But a declaration cannot stop a moving tide; the problem of "polycentrism" remains a serious one.

The Polish Communist Party has officially accepted the new common principles, but it continues stubbornly to maintain its exclusive right to apply them in Poland. Since the Moscow conference, the Russians have obviously increased their pressure on Gomulka, particularly with respect to "revisionism." And Gomulka has repeatedly condemned the theses of Kolakowski, whom the Russians put on the same level as Djilas and the "traitor" Imre Nagy. But Kolakowski has remained a member of the party and editor-in-chief of a philosophical magazine, and has been awarded a scholarship in Holland by the Polish government. This example at once throws into relief the degree of Gomulka's independence and the difficulties which he must meet in conserving it.

Postscript

Since this article was written, a number of important events have occurred. To describe them briefly:

On April 14, in a speech delivered at a trade unions

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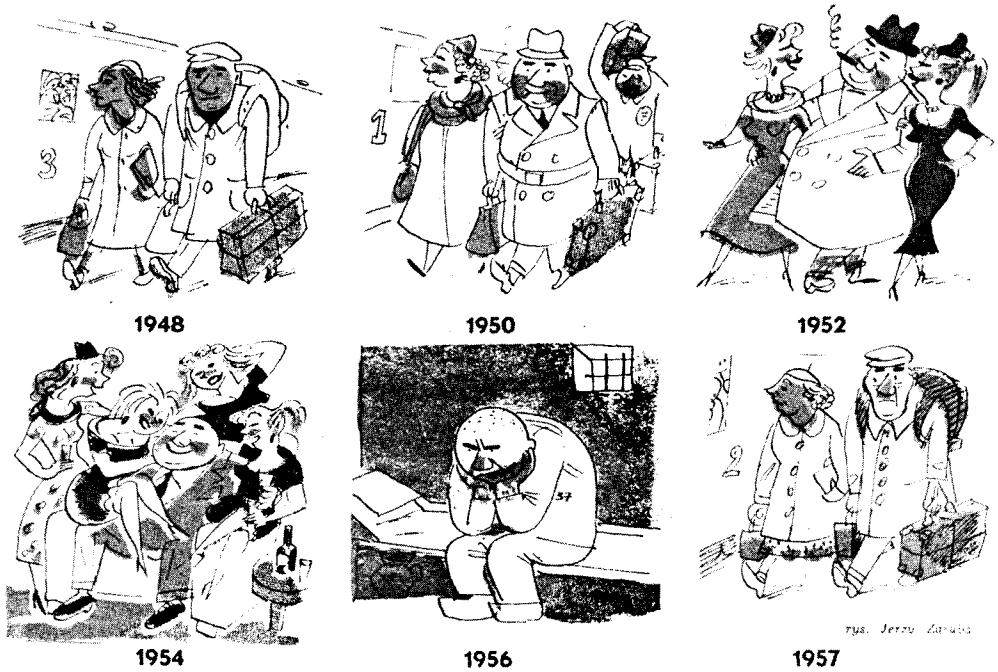
congress, Gomulka attacked the workers' councils for placing their immediate economic interests above the long-term interests of the national economy. On this occasion he announced a new program designed to put the hitherto antonomous councils firmly under the control of the party organizations and the unions, thus further reducing the promises of the "Springtime in October" of 1956.

On the literary side, B. Werblan, a responsible party official, announced at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Cultural Workers of the party that "in the future, neither time nor money would be wasted on the publication of demoralizing works which do not contribute to the socialist reconstruction of the state." Subsequently, a certain number of writers, including several Communists, were informed that their works, whether finished or in progress, would not be published, and a violent attack was unleashed against the writers Marek Hlasko and Leopold Tyrmand.

Thus the two most important phenomena of "revisionism"—the workers' councils and freedom of expression—have been placed in grave jeopardy. The Polish government is doubtless reacting to Soviet pressure and to the general tendency toward ideological "consolidation" within the Communist bloc. It is significant that Warsaw participated in the boycott of the Yugoslav party congress held in April, together with Red China and all the countries of the Soviet orbit—albeit half-apologetically, and not without an effort to divorce itself from the hostile position adopted by Russia and its satellites.

The Polish paradox now consists in the fact that those who sowed the seeds of the October victory are reaping persecution, whereas the peasants, the Catholic Church and small-scale business—who played little or no role in the events of 1956—are continuing to profit from the situation. But Gomulka cannot liquidate his problem by eliminating the "revisionists," *i.e.* the great majority of the intellectuals and of the non-party worker activists. Revisionism is no longer, as in the time of Bernstein, confined to this or that "heretic." It is the product of the experience of forty years of Communist dictatorship, and as such will surely hound the "pragmatist" leaders of today's Poland, as well as the men in the Kremlin who are doing their best not to preside over the liquidation of their restive empire.

WAKACJE PANA PREZESA



MR. CHAIRMAN'S VACATIONS

—From Szpilki *(Warsaw), December 1, 1957.*

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The Polish Economy: Problems and Prospects

By Leon Lewins

AMONG THE MANY PROBLEMS which confronted the Gomulka regime upon its assumption of power in October 1956, none was more pressing than the critical economic situation in Poland. In the course of twelve years of Soviet domination, heavy abuses had been inflicted on the economy—enforced industrialization pressed at a rapid pace, excessive defense expenditures directed toward the building up of an armaments industry, poorly conceived planning followed by overzealous efforts to exceed planned goals, and perhaps most devastating, extensive exploitation of Polish resources for the direct benefit of the Soviet Union. The balance between sectors of the Polish economy was distorted out of all proportion. Heavy industry was overexpanded in relation both to the domestic base of ready raw materials and to the country's ability to pay for imports which might otherwise have kept its facilities fully utilized. The production of coal, Poland's most important earner of foreign exchange, was falling off, leaving increasingly less available for export. Agricultural output was low; with a population of seven million less than before the war, Poland had become an importer of grain at the rate of about one million tons per year, in contrast to its prewar role as a regular exporter of that commodity. Light industry had been neglected, with the result that the supply of consumer goods was inadequate both in absolute terms and in relation to the purchasing power of the population, poor as it was; such goods as were available were shoddy in quality and frequently not those most needed. As a further depressant on the low living standard, the housing situation was desperate and continuing to grow worse. In short, the economic ills plaguing Poland cut across every sector of the economy, infecting the entire structure.

In a belated attempt to ameliorate this situation, the pre-Gomulka regime initiated a series of corrective measures in early 1956, including downward revisions of the Five-Year Plan goals and shifts in planned investments to extend more funds to light industry and agriculture. These actions, however, offered too little too late: the Polish people's resentment against depressed living conditions and against Stalinist regimentation, encouraged in the climate of increasing anti-Soviet protest throughout Eastern Europe, built up a wave of popular pressure which swept the Gomulka regime into power.

The rapidity of developments leading up to the October upheaval left Gomulka and his supporters little time to work out a long-range economic program. As soon as the new regime assumed power, however, it set about enacting a broad sweep of measures which further extended the eleventh-hour actions of its predecessor and which aimed at erasing the effects of the most unpopular policies of the past.

The aim of the present paper is to outline the major aspects of Gomulka's economic policy as first announced and enacted; then to review general developments during and since 1957 to determine wherein the program has been successful and wherein it has failed to achieve its objectives; and finally, to discuss the serious economic problems which continue to plague the regime and the latter-day trends in policy which they have engendered.

Reforms and Incentives

The multitude of policy changes initially instituted by Gomulka fall roughly into three main categories: those dealing with the central economic plan and with the overall direction of the economy; those pertaining to the methods of implementing planned tasks; and those aimed at stimulating a growth of economic initiative in general. In all three types of action, and particularly in the latter two, the regime placed stress on introducing elements of incentive designed to elicit popular support for the program.

The first task of the regime was an overhaul of the economic plan. In the field of investments, previous

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excessive outlays were lowered to levels more compatible with Poland's national income and resources, leaving a larger share of the national income for consumption. The maximum limit on accumulation (investments plus state reserves) in 1957 was reduced to 19.3 percent of the national income, as compared to 29.3 percent in 1955.[1] In industry, the pace of development for the heavy branches was slowed down significantly, and relatively greater emphasis was placed on consumer goods production. Priority was also assigned to the growth of investment goods output for those industries lagging behind the general industrial development—specifically for the coal, electric power, building materials and foundry products industries.

The most drastic policy changes occurred in the field of agriculture. Collectivization was put on a voluntary basis, and over 80 percent of the collectives in existence before October 1956 promptly disbanded; the right to buy, sell and lease private land was restored to the peasants; compulsory milk deliveries were abolished and other delivery quotas substantially reduced; prices paid by the state for agricultural products were doubled; restrictions on sales of products outside the network of state purchasing stations were eliminated; finally, tax rates were lowered and larger credits made available to the peasants. In short, the regime beat a total retreat from rural "socialism" in an effort to provide the incentive for a growth in agricultural output.[2]

Similar though far less drastic measures were instituted with respect to the private urban sector. The regime lifted a number of earlier restrictions on handicrafts, small-scale industry and retail trade, and within certain limits (to be discussed further) encouraged their expansion through the enactment of more liberal regulations concerning the procurement of licenses, raw materials, equipment, credits, and premises.

In the socialized sector of industry, a number of reforms aimed at expanding economic initiative and increasing productive efficiency through a limited decentralization of planning and administration and through the extension of greater autonomy to individual socialized enterprises. The number of production indices in the central plan was substantially reduced, and provisions concerning its implementation were simplified toward the end of cutting down bureaucratic interference with the details of production. Individual enterprises were granted the right to a greater voice in approving planned production goals, authorization to seek investment funds through bank credit over and above the investments scheduled in the central plan, the right to set prices for certain products and services, and permission—with specific approval from higher authority—to bypass regular disposal channels in selling finished products. The regime also initiated certain measures to stimulate the workers' interest in the attainment of economic goals. Its main action in this respect was the introduction of the much-publicized "workers' councils" in socialized enterprises. The councils, made up of elected representatives of the workers, were given management functions in certain areas of an enterprise's affairs, and the right to conduct other activities on behalf of the workers. As a financial incentive, the regime ordered the creation of a special fund in every socialized enterprise to be used directly or indirectly for the benefit of the workers and to be administered by the workers' council. The fund was to be made up of 1.5 percent of the payroll, plus one-half of enterprise earnings in excess of those planned, plus all income from by-products. Part of the fund, later restricted to 8.5 percent, could be spent as direct payments to workers, usually in the form of an extra month's wages. The remainder was to be spent on the construction of workers' housing and on various social services.[3] The reported aim of this scheme was to give the entire personnel of an enterprise an interest not only in the fulfillment (and overfulfillment) of production plans but also in the financial solvency of the enterprise.

The 1957 Record

The above actions constitute the main lines of Gomulka's "new economic policy" as it was initially conceived and enacted. What has been its effect in its first full year of operation and the months since? Perhaps inevitably, in view of the scope of the program and the magnitude of the problems at which it was aimed, reports on its performance to date present a complex and contradictory picture: there has been progress in some areas, disappointments and failure in others; some debilitating trends have been reversed, others accentuated. In certain areas where achievement did not come up to expectation, the regime has lately introduced significant modifications or changes in policy.

Considering the performance record for 1957 from the point of view of the immediate needs of the population,

[1] *Zycie Gospodarcze* (Warsaw), No. 29, 1957; basic statistics of the Five-Year Plan prepared by the State Planning Commission.

[2] See the farm policy statement of the PZPR and the ZSL, *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), January 9, 1957. (For a full discussion of Gomulka's agricultural policy, see Jan Przybyla's article which follows Mr. Lewins' in this issue—Ed.)

[3] Piotr Jaroszewicz, "Aktualne Problemy Dzialalnosci Rad Robotniczych" (Current Problems of Activity by Workers' Councils), included in *Aktualne Zagadnienia Polityki Partii i Rzadu* (Current Questions of Party and Government Policy), Ksiazka i Wiedza, Warsaw, 1957, p. 104.

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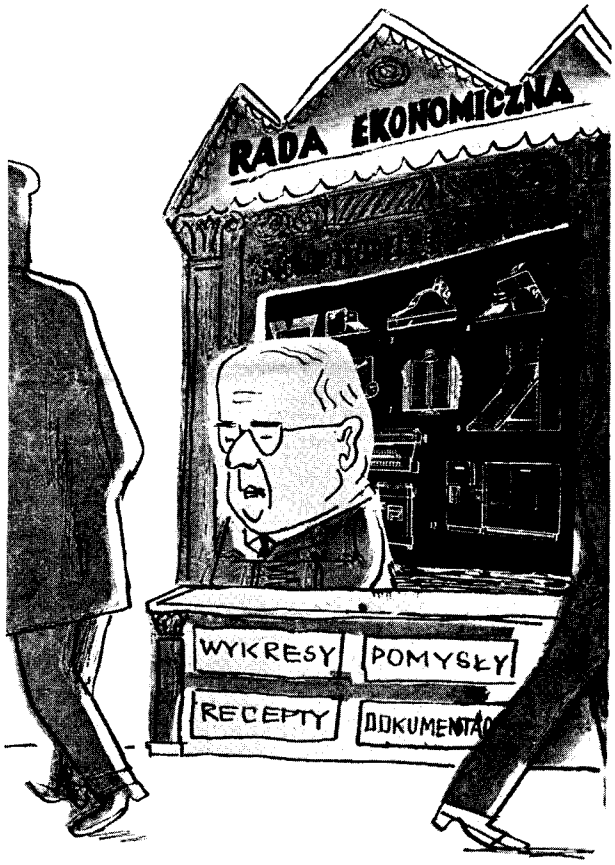
agriculture was without doubt the star of the Polish scene. The agricultural sector registered a substantial increase in output, particularly of grain, and was the one area which showed quick progress in producing goods needed to raise the population's standard of living. The grain crop was a record 13.6 million metric tons, representing a 12.5 percent rise over the 1956 crop; total agricultural production rose four percent over 1956.[4] The government's liberalized agricultural policy undoubtedly contributed to this achievement; it also resulted in a higher degree of fulfillment of compulsory deliveries than in the past, a partial payment of arrears in such deliveries for past years, and a satisfactory level of governmental grain purchases outside the compulsory delivery system. Moreover, the revival of private initiative in agriculture created an increased demand for land.

In the industrial sectors, gross production increased an overall average of 9.6 percent over 1956, nearly matching the 10 percent increase achieved in 1956 over the previous year.[5] However, while the output of most commodities surpassed 1956 levels by varying percentages, it failed in a number of important industries to reach planned goals. Production of iron and copper ores, crude steel, freight cars, sulphuric acid and bricks all fell short of the target. Output of electric power increased, but was still inadequate to meet requirements. Conversely, the production of coal, amounting to 94 million metric tons, was over a million tons below the mark attained in 1956, although it exceeded the 1957 planned target by a million tons.

The economy registered only a modest improvement in the output of consumer goods; it was far from enough to offset a growth in the population's purchasing power (to be discussed shortly), resulting in a threat of runaway inflation which was averted only by increased imports and the release of consumer goods from state reserves. The cost of increased imports of such goods had to be covered partly by a rise in short-term indebtedness at high rates of interest, with adverse effect on Poland's already poor balance of payments situation.

[4] *Sprawozdanie z Wykonania Narodowego Planu Gospodarczego W Roku* 1957 (Report on the Execution of the National Economic Plan in 1957), separate enclosure in *Biuletyn Statystyczny* (Warsaw), Main Statistical Bureau, No. 1, 1958.



– A klientów jak nie ma, tak nie ma...

Pictured: A display of "new economic models."
Offered: "Drafts, suggestions, prescriptions, documentations."
Comment:—And still there are no customers . . .

—From Szpilki (Warsaw), December 1, 1957.

Foreign Economic Relations

On the whole, however, Poland's foreign economic relations improved with both the East and the West during 1957 and since.

An important Soviet-Polish agreement signed in Moscow in November 1956 placed relations between the two countries on a new footing.[6] Poland's economic gains as a result of the agreement included: (1) cancellation of its indebtedness to the USSR, exceeding $500 million (*i.e.*, over two billion rubles in Soviet credits, exclusive of interest, originally scheduled for repayment during 1957-65); (2) delivery of 1.4 million tons of grain during 1957 on credit, at an estimated value of $100 million repayable in 1961-62; (3) an additional credit of $175 million (700 million rubles at the official 1-4 rate of exchange) for the purchase of Soviet goods to be delivered during 1958-60, and to be repaid during 1963-65; (4) more equitable terms of trade and especially higher prices, comparable to those in the world market, for Polish coal shipments to the USSR; (5) repatriation of

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] Text of the agreement published in *National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe*, Paul E. Zinner, Ed., Columbia University Press, New York, 1956, pp. 306-14.

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Poles still detained in the USSR[7]; and (6) agreement on the procedure for settling other outstanding accounts. This last point led to the settlement in 1957 of the transit account for the period 1946-53 and resulted in an additional undisclosed sum of rubles in Poland's favor. Moreover, the USSR agreed to pay Poland more equitable fees for the transport of mail and goods, including coverage for the depreciation of railway roadbeds.

During 1957 Poland also received credits from other bloc countries, including $100 million from East Germany to develop the production of brown coal and $87.5 million from Czechoslovakia to exploit newly discovered sulphur deposits and to develop further the output of bituminous coal. Since the advent of the Gomulka regime Soviet bloc credits to Poland have risen to $462.5 million.

During the same period Poland also received short- and long-term credits from the West, amounting to $274 million. These include $193 million in long-term credits from the United States—$95 million in 1957 and $98 million this year—and some $81 million in short-term credits from France, Canada, the United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, and Italy. The US credits are repayable over a period of 20 years but provide for an initial grace period of five years; they have enabled Poland to purchase badly needed grain, cotton, oil and fats, hides, plastics and medical equipment, as well as some industrial and mining machinery and equipment.

The net effect of developments in Poland's external economic relations under Gomulka has been to stabilize the country's foreign trade at the current ratio of approximately 60 percent with the Soviet bloc and 40 percent with the West. The share of the Soviet bloc has declined in recent years; it accounted for 70 percent in 1953-54 and 63.5 percent in 1955, dropping to 60 percent in 1956-57. While the above agreements envisage increased trade with the Soviet bloc during 1958-60, Poland's trade with the West is also expected to rise; thus the 60-40 ratio will probably remain fairly stable.

The Private Sector—a Partial Retreat

Before turning to the bleaker aspects and broader problems of the Polish economy, it might be well to mention developments to date in the private enterprise sector, where some reversal in regime attitudes has taken place.

The liberalized economic policy initially proclaimed by the Gomulka regime in October 1956 created a more favorable atmosphere for the expansion of handicrafts, private small-scale industry, and retail trade; within a year the number of artisans' shops increased by 39 percent (from 96,652 to 134,315), active small factories doubled (from 1,500 to 3,000), and retail trade outlets grew by 134 percent (from 11,905 to 27,853).[8]

Originally the government viewed the expansion of the private sector as an expedient to fill gaps inadequately covered by the socialized sector. Later on, as pools of unemployment began to grow in many localities, due in part to personnel reductions in the governmental and party apparatus and to the increased flow of repatriates from the USSR (about 10,000 per month), this sector was also looked to as a possible source for employment of surplus labor. While the regime welcomed the increase in goods and services provided by the private sector, it soon found that the growth of new private enterprises ran counter to governmental objectives with respect to location, sources of raw materials, kinds of products manufactured, and prices.

The government had wanted the private sector (1) to develop in the countryside and in western parts of Poland rather than in large cities or in crowded central districts of the country, (2) to use local raw materials and scrap instead of scarce or imported materials, (3) to concentrate on craftsmen's services and the production of building materials rather than to compete with state enterprises in such fields as textiles, cosmetics, or synthetic materials, and (4) to sell products at prices on a par with those in the socialized outlets. Private enterpreneurs, on the other hand, tended to circumvent governmental wishes, concentrating their activities in areas and on products which offered the maximum economic viability for their enterprises. Inasmuch as the government in most cases failed to supply private enterpreneurs with needed raw materials, let alone at the low prices paid by state industries, most private firms had to resort to bribery in order to stay in business. However, prevailing shortages provided a ready market for their products at almost any price, especially since quality-wise these products were superior to the output of socialized industry.

As a result of this situation, there has been a recent surge of official criticism against the private sector, charging it with speculation, black market dealings, and overpricing of products. Local people's council's have also been criticized for failing to develop a "well thought-out policy" of licensing private enterprises in compliance with party objectives. In December the regime published a list of strict criteria to be applied in the issuance of new licenses to the private sector.[9] In addition, a tax reform

[7] While the regime faces serious problems in supplying repatriates with provisions, housing and jobs, their return should nevertheless be considered an economic as well as a political gain to the country in the long run.

[8] Marzec Mieczyslaw, "W Sprawie Inicjatywy Prywatnej" (In the Case of Private Initiative), *Zycie Partii* (Warsaw), No. 12, 1957.

[9] *Ibid.*

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was instituted, retroactive to January 1, 1957, which established a ceiling on annual income of 180,000 *zlotys* per family and imposed a new "equalization tax," or surtax, increasing the maximum rate from 65 to 80 percent on net incomes exceeding 96,000 *zlotys* per family.[10]

While the government continues to declare it is in favor of expanding private enterprise,these actions indicate a hardening policy aimed at holding down the growth of the private sector in the future.

Inflation and Income Problems

Against the aforementioned gains achieved under Gomulka's program, a number of critical problems have continued to plague the regime and in fact have been adversely influenced to some extent by developments during 1957. The most crucial of these problems—and one which both underlies and aggravates other negative trends in the economy—has been the regime's inability thus far to effect a rise in the living standard of the large working population. A basic element in this situation has been the persistence of inflationary pressures, brought about by the severe shortage of consumer goods needed by the population, and further aggravated by a new problem of unequal distribution in urban and rural income.

Perennial shortages of consumer goods had built up inflationary pressures in Poland throughout the postwar period; both despite and because of these pressures, the pre-Gomulka regime had instituted extensive wage raises during 1956, adding to the burdens inherited by Gomulka. Although the new regime's initial policy was to hold the line on wages, popular pressures—reflected in sporadic strikes in individual plants during 1957—compelled it to grant further, albeit smaller, raises in wages and salaries and moderate increases in family allowances.

According to the Chairman of the Planning Commission, Jedrychowski, the gross income of the population increased by 39.3 billion *zlotys* during 1957. While taxes and other payments to the government increased during the same period by 5.6 billion *zlotys* and increased prices for consumer goods siphoned off another 8.5 billion, the growth in the population's purchasing power still exceeded 25 billion *zlotys*.[11]

In spite of increases in money wages, the real income of workers grew very little. Jedrychowski hedged on this issue, first asserting that "real wages," allowing for price increases, had risen by some 14 to 15 billion *zlotys* (or by 11 to 12 percent), but then admitting that this figure was based on the total sum paid out in wages—that is, it included wages paid to new entrants to the labor force during the year—and did not represent an increase either in average wages or in average workers' incomes. Available data and information offer strong evidence that the increase in workers' real incomes was rather small, while the major share of increased purchasing power accrued to the peasants.

Higher peasant income derived both from increased output and from a hike in state prices for agricultural products, as well as from sales in the free market. From the government alone the peasants received 9.8 billion *zlotys* more in 1957 than in 1956 in the form of direct payments, and 1.2 billion *zlotys* more in operating credits, credits for investment, and as compensation for insured losses. Subtracting their expenditures in land taxes, insurance premiums and repayment on earlier credits—amounting to 1.5 billion *zlotys* more than in 1956—the peasants' increase in income from 1957 transactions with the government was 9.5 billion *zlotys*. About half of this gain was absorbed by the rise in prices for goods and services, leaving them a net gain of some 4.5 or 5.0 billion *zlotys*, or about 17 percent over 1956. Additional peasant income from other sources, principally from sales in the free market, is estimated by the Main Statistical Bureau of Poland at over 12 billion *zlotys*.[12]

While data on the increase in the peasants' real income are not available, the figure undoubtedly is nowhere near the increase in money income, since production costs in agriculture have also risen considerably in this period; at the same time, it is certain that the peasants' real income increased substantially more than that of industrial workers.

While this disparity between rural and urban income must be of real concern to the government because of its effect on the workers' standard of living, the exigencies of the overall economic situation seem to bring about governmental actions which tend to widen the existing gap. On the one hand, the government is reluctant to abolish remaining compulsory deliveries of grain, meat and potatoes for fear that the peasants' income will rise too rapidly; on the other, it enacts measures which tend in that very direction, such as the recent increase in the price of beef and the planned increase in the price of sugar beets and other industrial crops. So far there is no indication of any governmental steps planned to compensate the workers for the higher prices they have to pay.

Another problematical aspect of high rural income is the phenomenon that the increase in rural purchases lags far behind the increase in the peasants' income. For example, during last January rural purchases increased only by four percent over the same month in 1956, while

[10] Trybuna Ludu, *August* 15, 1957. Value of the *zloty* is 4 to $1.00 at the official exchange rate, 24 to $1.00 at the tourist rate.

[11] Jedrychowski's statement quoted in *ibid*, February 28, 1958.

[12] Data on peasant income quoted from Jedrychowski, *ibid*.

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state payments for agricultural products were some 35 percent higher.[13] It would appear therefore, that a systematic accumulation of cash is taking place in the countryside. Probably one of the aims behind the government's recent decision to sell an additional 400,000 hectares of land belonging to state farms is to siphon off some of the hard cash accumulated by the peasants before they start using it to bid for scarce manufactured consumer goods.

Crucial Ills and Current Actions

The problem of income disparity is, of course, simply one aspect of the basic issue confronting the regime: how to increase overall production and productivity to an extent which will allow the provision of consumer goods in sufficient volume to effect a significant rise in the workers' standard of living. While this is recognized as the fundamental problem, it must be frankly stated that the prospects for an increase in output sufficient to this end are exceedingly dim in any sector of the economy except perhaps agriculture, owing to basic factors in Poland's present situation which restrict the regime's area of action.

In the first place, structural rigidity in the economy stemming from past investment and industrialization policies, as well as the lack of substantial reserve funds, prevent the regime from making any drastic alteration in the investment structure toward the end of providing more of the goods and services needed by the population. In addition, basic doctrinal rigidity—along with considerations of Poland's position *vis-à-vis* Moscow and the Soviet bloc—obviously rule out the regime's acceptance for other economic sectors of the principle of free private enterprise which demonstrated such effectiveness in agriculture.

In this situation, Gomulka's "new economic model" is hardly likely to arouse the enthusiasm of the workers, since it holds out little hope for an improvement in their economic situation comparable to that enjoyed by the peasants. Indeed, the most recent actions of the regime —and particularly its announced program of objectives for 1958—tend to postpone hope for significant further improvements in the living standard to the indefinite future, laying stress instead on a new tack of austerity as the means to a healthier economy in the long run.

The announced aim of the 1958 program—adopted as a resolution of the Eleventh Plenum of the party Central Committee, meeting February 28-March 1[14]—is to lay the foundation for a more stabilized economy through increased production, higher productivity, a growth in the reserves of goods for the domestic market, and improvement in Poland's balance of payments position. These objectives presumably are to be accomplished by the device of tying wages to productivity; the resolution lays down the strict injunction that a rise in the former cannot precede an increase in the latter. Higher productivity is to be facilitated through reductions in industrial "overgrowth," or surplus labor, and through increased work discipline in the form of stricter control over sick benefit payments, including maximum limits on enterprise funds which may be used for this purpose.

The Problem of Surplus Labor

Provisions in the Plenum resolution designed to raise productivity through a reduction of surplus labor in industry touch on a controversial issue which has been discussed among Polish economists ever since the initial decision was taken to conduct enterprises more economically and on the basis of their individual profitableness.

[13] *Zycie Gospodarcze,* March 9, 1958.

– Co tu się dzieje?
– Jedna pani miała widzenie, że sprzedają cytryny.

IN CRACOW

—What's happening here?
—A lady had a vision that they're selling lemons . . .

—From Szpilki (Warsaw), October 13, 1957.

[14] *Trybuna Ludu,* March 4, 1958.

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Surplus (or unnecessary) labor has been estimated by the Polish Economic Council to amount to about 20 percent of total industrial employment in relation to existing capacity, or some 500,000 workers. The Plenum resolution aimed at reducing this figure by compelling all workers holding pensions to leave the labor force. Specifically, as of July 1, pensions are to be paid only to those who have permanently retired from work, with certain authorized exceptions. As compensation, workers' pensions are to be increased to 500 *zlotys* a month, the prevailing minimum wage, and widows' pensions to 360 *zlotys* a month; however, these increases cannot begin to offset the hardship worked on those compelled to retire, whose present earnings are probably somewhere near the national average monthly of 1,389 *zlotys*.[15]

The advisability of such moves toward the reduction of the labor surplus in industrial enterprises has been disputed by some economists. Mainly the problem arises out of the present cyclical fluctations in the production pattern, caused by inadequate supplies and the irregular delivery of raw materials. In order to meet planned production goals, enterprises are obliged to hire more workers than would be necessary under normal supply conditions; peaks of employment usually occur toward the end of reporting periods. An improvement in the volume and flow of raw materials probably would tend to reduce the problem of surplus labor naturally; however, domestic production is low and the procurement of raw materials needed from abroad, especially from the West, is hampered by Poland's difficulties in its balance of payments.

Objections to reducing surplus labor have been raised, among others, by the Polish economist Michal Kalecki, who has held that to dismiss "surplus" workers when suitable alternative employment opportunities cannot be provided, involves economic and social disadvantages which may not be matched by the gains expected to result from increased productivity. Kalecki has contended:

. . . because of the shortage of raw materials it would be impossible to employ the released workers in other enterprises, and it is unlikely that they would voluntarily move to the labor deficit branches, such as coal mining and state farms. Their eventual employment in public works would have no financial cover, since a considerable part of the savings resulting from dismissals of the workers in the enterprises where they were formerly employed will be eaten up by the increased earnings of the workers remaining in these enterprises.[16]

Kalecki's viewpoint both underscores and is based upon a longer-range dilemma facing the regime: namely, the aim of eliminating surplus labor runs against the aim of providing and maintaining full employment of the population—a situation which is bound to be aggravated in the near future by the high rate of population growth in the postwar period. Until now unemployment has

[15] Average monthly wage is cited from Gomulka's speech at the Fourth Congress of Trade Unions, published in *Trybuna Ludu*, April 15, 1958; the figure is based on the first nine months of 1957.

[16] *Nowe Drogi* (Warsaw), No. 11-12, 1956.

A Superfluous Man . . .

The director asked Frasio to come into his office.

"Please," he said, pushing up a chair.

Frasio sat down on the edge of the chair.

"My dear colleague," said the director, pleasantly. "You have been with us four years already, haven't you?"

Frasio mustered the courage to correct the director: "Five, to be exact."

"Splendid, splendid . . . And how many bribes have you accepted during this time? And how large were they?"

"What?" Frasio thought that he didn't hear well.

The director banged his cigarette case in front of Frasio.

"I am asking you how many times did you accept bribes?"

"Not a single time."

"That's impossible. Mr. Antoni, will you please search your memory."

Frasio frowned as if in thought, although he knew that it made no sense.

"No, I've never dirtied myself with a bribe."

"Who's talking about dirtying?" said the director, straightening the sleeve of his jacket. "I am asking you not to be afraid and to tell the truth."

"But I have really never taken a bribe. I swear to it! Never!"

The director stopped smiling. He looked at Frasio sadly, as if with regret.

"Too bad. I wanted to promote you, but now I see that I shall have to dismiss you. I am very sorry."

Frasio almost fell from his chair.

"What . . . what for? he stammered. "For honesty?"

"No, for being superfluous," said the director. "These days, if an official doesn't get any bribes, it means that the work that he does is of no use to anyone. It's not worth a broken penny. You may, therefore, abolish the job, and dismiss the official. Do you agree with me?"

"Yes," whispered Frasio, bowing his head.

Indeed, it would be most difficult to prove that his work was useful to anyone. It consisted of counting the words of the requests submitted to his office.

—Leonard Wallicht, Szpilki, (Warsaw), March 2, 1958.

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not been one of Poland's important problems; while the number of local pools of unemployed has been growing during the last year or two, such unemployment has mainly affected women and new entrants to the labor force. Between now and 1960 the annual number of new entrants into the labor market actually ought to be smaller than in past years due to the relatively low birth rate during World War II. By 1961, however, a substantial increase in the rate of population growth after the war will begin to be reflected in increased pressure for job opportunities.

To provide employment for the coming generations, the regime must again increase investments, reduced during 1956 and 1957 to allow a greater proportion of the national income for consumption. Accumulation, which in 1957 was reduced to 19.3 percent of the national income, is scheduled to increase to 23.2 percent in 1960.[17] Yet this increase in the rate of investment will necessarily have a depressing effect on the rate of growth in consumption—that is, in the supply of goods and services so sorely needed by the population.

The Housing Situation

The rate of population growth—currently amounting to 1.8 percent or some 500,000 persons per year— underscores, in turn, still another pressing problem which confronts the regime and one which directly affects the living standard of the population—the critical inadequacy of housing in Poland.

The present crisis in housing had its beginning in World War II, when heavy damage in urban areas created a desperate shortage of dwelling space. Throughout the postwar period, the rate of residential construction has continued to lag far behind that of population growth, owing to the higher priorities assigned to industrial construction and to severe shortages in building materials. Although the present volume of residential building is a little larger than in the past, it is still considerably below the level needed to accomodate the yearly population increment alone. At the same time, deterioration shrinks the size of existing dwelling space at the rate of one to two percent a year. The official statistical average sets current urban habitation at about two persons per room; however, this figure disregards the fact that large numbers of houses in an extreme state of dilapidation continue to be occupied for lack of other dwelling space.

The aforementioned resolution of the Eleventh CC Plenum dealt prominently with housing in an effort to arrest this steadily worsening situation; the nature of the proposals put forward leave doubt, however, whether any significant improvement can be effected in the near future.

On the one hand, the resolution proposed a large expansion of residential construction, to be financed by the state, socialized enterprises and private individuals. First it envisaged the construction of apartment houses, to be owned by socialized industrial enterprises, and to be financed by an allocation of no less than one-quarter of the aforementioned special funds of given enterprises, as well as by governmental subsidies and long-term credits, and deposits from prospective tenants. The regime also promised to provide long-term credits for cooperative dwelling projects and for the construction of individual family homes. In addition to these projects, the state's basic construction program, administered by the local people's councils, is scheduled for expansion. Financing of the latter program is to be bolstered by requiring deposits from tenants during the period of occupation, by charging extra rental fees for space occupied in excess of the "prevailing norm" (not otherwise identified), and by imposing higher rents amounting to actual amortization costs on those tenants who pay income and turnover taxes, as distinguished from taxes on wages.

The trouble with this scheme, however, is that it attacks only half the problem—*i.e.*, the aspect of financing —while it leaves almost untouched the equally vital issue of providing an adequate supply of building materials. While the resolution recognized that the basic condition for solving current housing difficulties is the expansion of facilities for the production of building materials, it maintained that this end should be accomplished through rather small investments—that is, by reactivating some idle plants and by encouraging plants in other lines of production to start manufacturing by-products needed for local construction.

In view of this limited approach, a substantial increase in the output of building materials appears questionable; the program as a whole may effect some increase in the volume of residential construction, but there can be no expectancy of a quick alleviation of the housing shortage.

An interesting aspect of the building program is the government's obvious attempt to use it as a means to promote a growth in private savings as a deflationary measure. This aim is apparent from a stipulation that the amount of savings set aside by individuals as "special accounts" for housing will be a factor in determining who is entitled to a new apartment or to loans for private home-building. In this way, the government

[17] *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 29, 1957.

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Questions . . .

From a report of a Polish writer on a talk with a Soviet worker:

I ask a woman worker of a rubber factory:

—What do you think about the events that took place in our country last October?

—We didn't expect it. We were very sorry.

—Why "sorry"? After all, that's how we became friends. And as a result of it, workers manage their own affairs through workers' councils, and the agricultural policy has changed in favor of the peasant.

—We did not know about all the details. And it was very unpleasant for us.

A moment of silence. Then she, in turn, asks:

—And is it really true that your Gomulka lives, with his family, in a two-room apartment in a big tenement house without plumbing, and that he goes to work in a streetcar?

There *is* plumbing in Gomulka's home. . . .

—K. T. Toeplitz, "The First Side of the World," report on a visit to the USSR, Nowa Kultura (Warsaw), No. 35, 1957.

hopes to tie up some of the population's purchasing power in excess of the volume of goods available on the market.

A Summary View

Viewing the whole economic scene in Poland, austerity seems to be the keyword for the present and for the immediate future—at least in the lives of the large working population. The austerity character of most regime policies in the new program—the requirement that productivity must rise before further wage raises are granted, the provision to compel pensioners to retire from the labor market and to live exclusively on their meager pensions, the design to curtail consumption for the sake of some improvement in housing—are bound to be highly unpopular among Polish workers. Anticipation of this reaction was reflected at the Eleventh Plenum in the attempts of the Natolinist (Stalinist) faction of the party to play up the adverse effects of the program on workers by demagogically criticizing its austerity features and proposing instead that the government grant wage increases out of proportion to present economic realities. While Gomulka decisively repulsed the Natolinists and removed their spokesman, Wiktor Klosiewicz, from his party and governmental positions, the tenor of the attack is undoubtedly symptomatic of the attitude toward the program to be expected from the workers.

Regime apprehensions concerning the workers' reaction have been dramatically underscored by Gomulka's very recent move to deprive workers' councils of their voice in the management of socialized industry and to prevent strike actions. In a major address of April 14, delivered at a Trade Unions' Congress in Warsaw, Gomulka proposed to transfer the managerial functions of the worker's councils to larger bodies—so-called "workers' self-government conferences"—whose membership would include factory councils (representing the party-dominated trade unions) and party plant committees.[18] The new conferences are to decide upon problems of production, to supervise the execution of such decisions, and to secure the workers' cooperation for the achievement of set goals; thus the meaningful functions of the workers' councils have been transferred to bodies which will be assured of a majority of party and trade union votes. Gomulka also called for a change in the composition of the presidia of workers' councils to include the enterprise director *ex-officio*, the chairman of the factory council and a representative of the party plant committee.

Gomulka's new move to rule out strikes—which he referred to as "signs of anarchy" and the "activity of class enemies"—consists specifically in an injunction against all but "authorized" work stoppages. The latter—as defined in a follow-up address by Loga-Sowinski, Chairman of the Trade Unions' Council—are restricted to stoppages of a fraction of an hour, to be initiated only by the factory council, to be used only as a last resort in cases of extreme grievance, and to be announced in advance to enterprise authorities. In short, the new policy amounts to a virtual ban on strike actions.

The main elements in today's situation thus present a bleak picture for workers: low real wages with little possibility for their substantial increase; high costs of private home construction which put the new program out of reach for the average industrial worker; continued scarcity and prohibitive prices of consumer goods, some of which require priority certificates, most of which involve considerable waiting, and almost all of which impose disproportionate financial sacrifice. Discouragement over these conditions has had a detrimental effect on the workers' interest in their jobs as well as on their social discipline, a morale situation which may become worse in the face of Gomulka's action to restrict the channels open to the workers for airing their grievances. The new measures to increase work discipline may have the inverse effect of inflating such problems as wide-

[18] Speech published in *Trybuna Ludu*, April 15, 1958.

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spread absenteeism, high labor turnover, pilferage, petty corruption, speculation and rising alcoholism.

In addition to coping with all of these urgent problems of the present, the Gomulka regime is confronted by such longer-range dilemmas as the potentially adverse effect of the campaign to raise productivity on rising unemployment and the further adverse effect of growing disparity between rural and urban earnings on the workers' living standard.

To sum up the situation as it looks today—the solution of the many serious problems besetting Poland will require the regime's reliance in the main on the country's own resources, and particularly on the will and energy of its population. The initial program and actions of Gomulka during October 1956 and in subsequent months—in pursuit not only of general economic improvement but of greater national sovereignty, democracy and legality—were sufficiently dynamic to mobilize the energy of the nation toward the achievement of proposed goals. Yet after a successful beginning, the regime—apparently caught in a bind between the population's desires for further freedoms and the exigencies of its own political situation—has slowed down the pace, and in some cases even reversed the direction, of its political and social reforms. At the same time, achievements in the economic sphere have fallen woefully short of popular aspirations and of the expectations of the regime itself. The result has been general disillusionment, detracting from the initial widespread support of Gomulka. Today the regime is merely accepted by the people; in this atmosphere, the open question is how—and whether—it can inspire the popular sacrifice and sustained long-range effort necessary for the attainment of the economic goals it pursues.

Gomulka and the Peasants

By Jan Przybyla

IT IS NO VIOLATION of scholarly objectivity to label Communist agricultural policy in Poland since World War II as the most runaway piece of lunacy in the history of that country. In the dozen years prior to the "peaceful revolution" of October 1956, regime efforts to impose the Soviet pattern of "reform" and collectivization on the Polish countryside succeeded in transforming a once fairly productive agriculture into a seriously ailing sector of the economy. The disastrous effects of crippling dogma combined with bureaucratic inefficiency have been frankly admitted by the successor regime of Wladislaw Gomulka, and an attempt is now being made to reverse the decline by injecting some measure of realism into agricultural policy.

The initial phases of the Polish Communists' agricultural program followed a pattern of promise and betrayal that has by now become familiar. An agrarian reform of 1944 enlisted popular support for the Communists by distributing some 5.5 million hectares of land (1 ha.=2.471 acres) among peasants and landless agricultural workers. But the right hand soon tried to take back what the left hand had granted; hints during 1948 of the impending "socialization" of agriculture took shape in the following year as a drive to force the peasants, through administrative and economic pressures, into collectives—the so-called "production cooperatives." The deceptive intent of this strategy is underscored by the contradictions in official policy statements in each phase. For example, in May 1945 Hilary Minc, then a member of the party Politburo and Minister of Industry, declared that the government "rejected as fantastic the insinuations spread by the enemy . . . [to the effect that] in agriculture the government tended toward a collective economy, [that] after the agrarian reform would come *kolkhozes*."[1] Three and one-half

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[1] *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z Vii sesji Krajowej Rady Narodowej 3-6 maja 1945,* (Stenographic record of the VII Session of the National Council of the Homeland, May 3-6, 1945), Warsaw, 1945, p. 47.

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years later Mr. Minc avowed as loudly that "liquidation of the capitalists is possible only through the collectivization of the countryside."[2]

From the first, however, regime pressures for collectivization ran into stiff resistance from the peasants, who stubbornly refused to give up their land. This resistance was manifested equally by the peasants who had been newly awarded small plots in the reform, and by farmers who had been long established on the land (according to a recent study of available information, the ratio of the former to the latter group among individual peasant farmers is about one to two).[3]

In attempting to break down this opposition, the regime drew on the entire Communist arsenal of tested tactics in economic chicanery and legalized terror. Forms of pressure included: requirement of compulsory deliveries of crops, milk, livestock and potatoes at low procurement prices; discrimination against individual farmers in the allocation of fertilizer supplies; almost total suspension of small-scale machinery supplies to private farms[4]; concentration of an overwhelmingly high proportion of agricultural investments in the socialized sector (which at no time accounted for more than about 25 percent of all agricultural land); and discriminatory classification of land values for tax purposes. In addition, a number of administrative measures and a constant barrage of propaganda aimed at creating in the countryside a hatred of the *"kulak,"* or "richer" farmer. Since no standard definition of the *kulak* was ever formulated, the anti-*kulak* campaign eventually came to mean the persecution of any farmer who managed to run his farm efficiently and at a profit—rather than at a subsidized deficit, as was the case with most of the state farms and *kolkhozes.*

The effects of these pressures were twofold. First, agricultural production stagnated—with the ironic consequence that an agricultural country had to resort to imports of grain to feed its population. Second, instead of the class struggle which the regime had hoped to inspire in the countryside, there developed an interclass solidarity between the richer and the poorer peasants, who tacitly joined forces against the common danger.

The virtual standstill in agricultural production in the period from 1949 through 1955 is revealed by the following figures:[5]

Value of Agricultural Production, 1949-55

(yearly averages in millions of zlotys * *at 1938 prices)*

	1949-50	1951-55	
	Actual	Planned	Actual
Total agric. production	8,429	10,023	8,719
Gross plant production	6,345	7,421	6,371
Gross animal production	4,341	5,420	4,891
Value of plant production per ha. of agric. land (in *zlotys)*	310	356	312

**The tourist exchange rate of 24* zlotys *to the dollar approximates the purchasing-power parity of the* zloty

In this stagnation, state and cooperative farms were, in spite of preferential treatment, by far the greatest culprits. The following data furnished by Gomulka himself give a striking picture of the inferior performance of the socialized sector as compared to individual farms:[6]

Agricultural Production in 1955

Type of production unit	*% of agric. land*	*% of total production*	*Value of production per ha. of agric. land**
Individual farms	78.8	83.9	621.10
Collective farms	8.6	7.7	517.30
State farms	12.6	8.4	393.70

(*In *zlotys*)

The performance record of the state sector should be judged in the light of the following facts: In the period under consideration, the socialized sector (state farms and *kolkhozes*) received approximately 85 percent of in-

[2] *Nowe Drogi,* theoretical and political organ of the CC of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), September-October 1948.

[3] *Notes et Etudes Documentaires* (Documentary Notes and Studies), Office of the Prime Minister, Secretariat General of the French Government, No. 2365, December 23, 1957, p. 4.

[4] *Zycie Gospodarcze,* No. 32, August 11, 1957, p. 7, published a careful study of the supply and availability of agricultural machinery to private farms. The authors (S. Fiutkowski and C. Kozlowski) based their calculations on such statistical data as were available for the years 1950-1956, as well as a statistical survey of some 2,000 individual farms. They concluded that "the number of machines decreased from year to year (with the exception of fertilizer machinery), since supplies did not make up for the machinery fallen into desuetude . . . In the period 1950-1956, some machines were not supplied at all . . ."

[5] United Nations, Economic Commission for Europe, *Economic Bulletin for Europe,* Vol. 9, No. 3, November 1957. Comparable figures for the year 1956 show a rise in production, reflecting in part the beginning of the breakdown of agricultural controls prior to the October upheaval. Data on actual production in 1956 for the four measures of value listed in the chart above are as follows (reading top to bottom). 10,092; 7,361; 5,689; and 361. The further, marked rise in production levels during 1957 is discussed later in this paper.

[6] Speech of W. Gomulka to the VIII Plenum of the CC of the Polish United Workers' Party, October 20, 1956, *Trybuna Ludu,* No. 294, Warsaw, October 21, 1956, p. 3.

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vestments in land improvement[7]; credits extended by the state to *kolkhozes* alone amounted at the end of 1955 to over 2.5 billion *zlotys*.[8] In the year 1954-55 individual farms had access to only 28.1 kilograms of artificial fertilizer per hectare, while cooperative and state farms obtained over twice that amount—respectively 58.6 and 59.2 kilograms.[9] In addition, the "charges" per hectare determining compulsory deliveries of crops and livestock to the state were lower for the cooperatives and state farms than for individual farms.

The obvious and basic reason for the agricultural decline was the dogmatic application of a political theory to conditions and to a mentality highly unsuited to the Soviet concept of the agricultural collective. Profoundly individualistic, with a keen sense of property and a real attachment to the soil, the Polish peasant put up a hard fight in defense of his right to till his own land. His stubborn refusal to join the *kolkhoz* found ample justification in the blunders he saw committed daily in the neighboring collectivized fields, bureaucratically administered on the basis of directives which were supposed to serve as an example of good management but which, as often as not, ran counter to sound agricultural practice or simple common sense. Party activists from the towns were vested with power and responsibilities beyond their capacity and experience; in many instances, they applied physical terror against peasants who refused to follow suit.[10] In the end, however, the party had to acknowledge the irrefutable logic of economic facts, and in the shock of October 1956, the policy of forced collectivization was dropped as suddenly as it had begun.

Gomulka's "NEP" for Agriculture

The fundamental principles of the new regime's agricultural policy were laid down in two documents: the first was Gomulka's speech of October 20, 1956, to the Eighth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR); the second was a joint declaration of the PZPR and its satellite formation, the United Peasant Party (ZSL) of January 7, 1957. Compared to the proposed changes in industrial policy, the new line in agriculture was, without a doubt, a much more radical departure from Soviet Communist orthodoxy; its revolutionary character, however, was limited by the fact that to a considerable extent it merely acknowledged a *de facto* situation at a moment of particular economic and political stress. In fact, while Mr. Gomulka was speaking in Warsaw, thousands of peasants all over the country were leaving the *kolkhozes,* dividing up the collective stocks on the basis of a rather disorderly distribution. The breakdown of the laboriously built-up *kolkhoz* apparatus was spectacular: in ten years the government by various means had succeeded in establishing about 10,000 production cooperatives; between September 1956 and May 1957 their number shrank to 2,200, of which 221 had been reorganized completely and 39 were newly set up.[11] Concurrently, the numerical composition and the acreage of the remaining *kolkhozes* showed a substantial reduction.

Faced with a mass liquidation of the *kolkhozes,* the government advanced as the first principle of its new agricultural policy a *recognition of peasant autonomy,* establishing the right of each peasant to join or to withdraw from production cooperatives, to cultivate his own farm and to join, if he so desired, various cooperative associations for the utilization of machinery, soil improvement or technical training.

Closely linked to this decision, the second stated aim of the regime was to *reduce, and eventually to abolish, compulsory deliveries* of crops and livestock. This was to be effected in two major ways: through a reduction of the compulsory quotas, and through a revision of procurement prices so as to bring them more into line with the market prices for the products in question.

A third point of the new program dealt with the problem of inefficiency in the *socialized sector:* state farms, agricultural machinery centers, and parish machine stations were to be subjected to a thorough investigation, and were to be run henceforth on a paying basis.

The fourth point of policy proclaimed by Mr. Gomulka established *respect for private property in land* and the right of private disposal of such property, although certain qualifications were stated with regard to the size of private holdings.

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[7] Economic Commission for Europe, *op. cit.,* p. 30 (French text).

[8] Gomulka, speech to the VIII plenum, *loc. cit.,* p. 3.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Trybuna Ludu,* Warsaw, May 25, 1951, reported a case in the district of Gryfice where members of the Communist youth movement (ZMP) were charged with conducting an inspection of farms. In seven instances, peasant homes had been plundered and the means of production destroyed. Similar cases occurred in Sokolow and Plonsk as well as in the district of Bialystok and Wroclaw. In every instance physical terror was used against the peasants. Members of the state machine stations took part in these operations.

[11] The statistics on this problem are somewhat contradictory. The numbers cited here represent a good balance. They are drawn from *Notes et Etudes Documentaires, prev. cit.,* p. 5.

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Finally, the new policy tackled the problem of *investments in agriculture,* with regard to both their proportion in the total budget and their allocation between the private and the socialized sectors.

At first sight these five major signposts of policy suggest a marked departure from Communist theory in the matter of agricultural organization, particularly in the question of property rights. Essentially, however, they were not of a theoretical but of an immediate and practical nature; they were the expressions of the basic need for more production at cheaper cost. Since, irrefutably and in spite of doctrine, the socialized way of running agriculture was producing too little and costing too much, and since, at the time, the country was in a mood of revolt, the doctrine had to go.

It was not completely jettisoned, however. While admitting the practical necessity of private property in agriculture, the new official theory maintained that in the long run the socialized methods of agricultural production would predominate and would be accepted by the peasants. However, this evolution would not be spontaneous; it would require continuous impetus from the regime: "the policy of the party and the policy of the state are the essential factors influencing the economy and social changes."[12] In the meantime, therefore, formations of peasant groups for cooperative action of any sort not only were to be encouraged, but above all were to be infiltrated by the party.

The application of the new policy since October 1956 thus tends to be characterized by two parallel but often conflicting concerns: on the one hand, the development of a viable agriculture; on the other, the halting—and eventually the reversal—of the process of "desocialization" of the countryside. The operation and effects of the program can best be understood by seeing how each of its five principles has been implemented.

Peasant Autonomy—A Dual Approach

The principle of peasant autonomy contains two essential elements: recognition of the small, individual producer's right to farm his own land without fear of discrimination, concomitant with continued insistence on the desirability of cooperative methods of work in whatever form these may manifest themselves. In practice, this has meant a two-pronged approach to the problem of agricultural production. In the course of 1957, about 150,000 hectares of fallow land, plus 400,000 hectares of formerly collectivized land belonging to the State Land Fund, were put up for sale to small and medium landed peasants. About 35,000 hectares which in previous years had been taken away arbitrarily from individual farmers and allotted to state farms (PGR), were taken back by their original owners.[13] In the course of 1958, the regime proposed to sell another 200,000 hectares in the State Land Fund to small and medium farmers. Generally payments were to be spread over a period of ten years; however, in cases where new farms were being established, owners were to be granted credits repayable in instalments over thirty years. It was further stated that such land would be sold at prices approximating those of the free market, and that the funds thus obtained would be devoted to agricultural investments.[14]

The second prong of the new approach consisted of state action to spur peasant initiative in establishing other forms of cooperation than that represented by the *kolkhoz.* Since October 1956 there has been a marked return to the predominant form of rural cooperation in Poland, the so-called "agricultural circles." Prevalent before World War II, these circles were autonomous bodies of individual farmers grouped together for professional or civic purposes, ranging from cooperation in the use of agricultural machinery or in the sale of products to rural education and village matters. At the end of May 1957 it was estimated that about 9,000 such circles had been reestablished with a total membership of over 270,000; by December the figures had increased to 11,200 circles with 315,000 members.[15]

From the first announcement of state support for this form of autonomous peasant organization, however, there has been increasing evidence that the real aim of the regime was political infiltration and the establishment of administrative control over the circles. Under the pretext of preventing them from falling under the domination of "rural exploiters" (a new name for the old label of *"kulak"*), the party has been making strenuous efforts in the past year to get its cadres into the circles and to set up a central organization which could effectively control their policies and direction of development. This drive, though still in an early stage, is

[12] Wiktor Herer, "W sprawie rozwoju kapitalizmu w rolnictwie" (On the question of the development of capitalism in agriculture) *Nowe Drogi,* No. 6, Warsaw, June 1957, p. 109.

[13] Mieczyslaw Jagielski, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, "W zwiazku z realizacja polityki partii na wsi" (In connection with the application of party policy in the countryside) *Nowe Drogi,* No. 7, July 1957, p. 4.

[14] Polish Press Agency, July 26, 1957; *Warsaw Radio,* July 27, 1957.

[15] Figures respectively from *Notes et Etudes Documentaires, prev. cit.,* p. 6, and "Communique of the Central Statistics Office," published by *Trybuna Ludu,* No. 46, February 15, 1958.

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not unlike the party's action in 1948-49 to subordinate the craft guilds to an overall organization which eventually deprived them of all semblance of autonomy and paralyzed what had been a useful and efficient form of craft association.[16]

In the infiltration drive, the United Peasant Party was assigned a significant role as an "ally" of the United Workers Party. A joint declaration of December 12, 1956, signed by Gomulka and Stefan Ignar as heads of the parties, stated: "The organizations of the two allied parties, acting in fraternal alliance, should encourage all forms of [cooperative] activity of the peasant masses . . . in conditions of democracy and internal order and peace."[17] However, this tactic of infiltration "by proxy" has been largely unsuccessful because of a "lack of real cooperation [and] isolation between the branches of the UPP and the United Workers Party in really important matters," and because of peasant disinterest in the UPP as a subservient instrument of the Communists.[18]

The Easing of Delivery Demands

Regulations governing the compulsory deliveries of crops, milk, potatoes and livestock were used, on the admission of party spokesmen, as a tactical weapon in the former regime's struggles against so-called "capitalism" in the countryside:

Compulsory deliveries limited the operation of the laws of the market in the sphere of distribution of national income, and to a considerable extent limited and even barred, in past years, the development of capitalist elements.[19]

In effect, the deliveries constituted both a thorn in the side of individual peasants, and a faintly camouflaged subsidy for the *kolkhozes*. Policy on quotas tended more and more to be dictated by political considerations, with the general result that by 1956 the "rich," *i.e.*, well-run farms were burdened out of all proportion to farms inclined toward deficit. The political aim of the regime was achieved in part, but in a distorted form: while the number of farms of over 7 hectares steadily diminished from 1950 to 1955, they did not join the socialized sector but rather swelled the ranks of smaller and less efficient farms.[20]

In his speech of October 20, 1956, Gomulka hinted at the possibility of eventual abolition of the system of compulsory deliveries, indicating at the same time that such action could come only as a consequence of increased agricultural and industrial production. In the meantime, steps were taken to alleviate the burden of deliveries to some extent: During 1957 compulsory quotas for milk (representing a value of some 1,270 million *zlotys*) were cancelled and deliveries of most crops were reduced by about one-third, with total exemption for farms under two hectares in size. Compulsory deliveries of potatoes were abolished for the same category of farms, and reduced quotas allowed for larger farms in a number of specific instances. Regional "people's councils" were authorized to decide whether reductions in livestock deliveries should be effected in particular cases. There was also a noticeable softening of the severity of state actions to recover back "debts" from farms which had failed to fulfill deliveries for the year 1956.

It is an open question whether compulsory deliveries will or will not disappear as a permanent phenomenon of the state's agricultural policy. So far, the tendency seems to be in the direction of attenuation, combined with the downward revision of the state's unrealistic procurement prices so as to bring them more in line with market prices for the same products.

Reform of the Socialized Sector

The poor performance of the socialized sector in agriculture in the years 1946 to 1956 impelled the present policy makers to a reassessment, if not of the basic doctrine of the long-run superiority of agricultural communism over individual farming, at least of the practical day-to-day operation of state farms, *kolkhozes* and machine stations. The essential rule to be applied henceforth was productivity; the socialist sector would continue to get favored treatment in the form of certain benefits (for example, in the matter of rent, of tariffs

[16] See Jerzy Olbrycht, "Rzut oka no Zwiazek Mlodziezy Wiejskiej" (A Look at the Organization of Rural Youth), *Nowe Drogi*, No. 9, September 1957.

[17] *Trybuna Ludu*, December 12, 1956.

[18] The quotation is from *Zielony Sztandar*, organ of the UPP, March 31, 1957. Lack of peasant enthusiasm for the UPP is discussed by Cz. Grzegorski in *Wies Wspolczesna* (Warsaw, December 1957); he writes: "The [party] organization is at a standstill from the point of view of the number of members and political tasks. In a word, we are weak in the countryside." The peasants' wariness is understandable in view of the UPP's basic programmatic principle, to wit: "Socialism is the program aim of the peasant movement; and . . . the strengthening of the worker-peasant alliance, the safeguarding of the leading role of the working classes in that alliance are indispensable conditions for achieving that aim." (Ozga-Michalski, *Trybuna Ludu*, March 8, 1957.)

[19] Wiktor Herer, *op. cit.* p. 110.

[20] *Rocznik Statystyczny 1956* (Statistical Yearbook 1956), Warsaw, 1957, p. 150.

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for the use of machinery supplied by the state machine stations, *etc.*), but such benefits were not to serve the purpose of subsidizing a running deficit. In short, state farms, *kolkhozes* and state machine stations were to pay their own way.

On the state farms, a number of reforms aimed directly at increased management efficiency. Until 1957, "the economic settling of accounts was unknown in the state farms";[21] this was to be remedied by giving them financial independence, and at the same time introducing rational accounting systems and eliminating incompetent staffs. As of July 1, 1957, all state farms were to operate on the basis of an agricultural year more adapted to the production cycle than the calendar year hitherto observed. The number of predetermined production indices (or targets) was reduced for the coming year, and wages of workers and the technical staff on state farms were linked to the financial yields of the farms. Changes were also introduced into the system of sales and supply from and to state farms, making it possible for each farm to select its purchasing agent and thus to obtain better delivery terms.

The problem of reforming the *kolkhozes*—or what was left of them—was complicated by an additional factor. As a result of the mass exodus of the peasants during and after the October 1956 upheaval, the average size of the collectives fell from just over 190 hectares to about 140 hectares.[22] At the same time a change took place in their social composition: the members who remained were for the most part the poorest peasants holding the smallest and least productive plots or with no land at all. Modifications have now been introduced into the statutes of the *kolkhozes* with a view to recruiting a more desirable membership. For example, rigid work norms have in many instances been abandoned in favor of more flexible regulations, whereby the members' share of work-days on the collective fields is dictated by the concrete needs of each farm. Such changes, however, seem to have had no effect on the peasants' mistrust of the collective form of agricultural organization; at the present time the *kolkhoz* is the last place to attract any peasant who can make a living on his own piece of land, however small. It has, on the other hand, become the last desperate refuge for the rural proletariat; and even here the landless peasant tends to leave the *kolkhoz* as soon as he finds an opening in industry.

The state machine stations and the parish machine stations have been affected just as drastically by the new policy. These had played an important role in the hopes of the Communist planners, who saw in them, and more particularly the former, the bastions of communism in the countryside. Both became discredited in the ten years of their existence to an extent which called into question their value at all. The major function of the state machine stations was to provide the heavier pieces of agricultural machinery for the use of collectives and, at higher rates, of individual peasants. Instead of the 820 stations scheduled for establishment by the end of the Six-Year Plan, only 424 were actually put into operation. Staffed with town-bred party activists, their performance became generally synonymous with bad management, delays and inefficiency. After October 1956, it was decided to sell any machinery not properly utilized by these stations, and to reshuffle both their administrative and technical staffs in the hope of arriving at a reasonable service.

The parish machine stations, which numbered 2,915 in 1955 and which constituted local depots of light agricultural machinery, were so ridden with problems of favoritism and corruption that the regime decided on their liquidation pure and simple. Their equipment—150,000 implements—was sold to individual farmers, *kolkhozes,* and agricultural circles.[23]

The Pained Retreat to Private Property

The new regime's recognition of the need for an agricultural system based on the individual ownership of land was, under conditions existing in Poland, certainly inevitable; nonetheless it posed a delicate issue insofar as Communist doctrine was concerned. The ideological explanation offered has been based mainly on the argument that although ownership of the land is overwhelmingly private, the tools of production (*e.g.,* machinery) will tend increasingly to be used in common. In their tactical retreat, the theoreticians have also resorted to an adaptation of the general Marxist notion concerning the exploitation of man by man; the argument is that the title to property matters not so much as the use made of it, and that the steps taken by the Communist state to limit the size of privately-owned farms to a maximum of 15-20 hectares, combined with

[21] Mieczyslaw Jagielski, *op.cit.*, p. 8. *Zycie Gospodarcze,* September 15, 1957 revealed that in 1956 the deficits from state farm production, 6,200 million *zlotys,* more than equalled the entire investments allocated to agriculture for the year 1958.

[22] ECE, *Economic Bulletin for Europe,* Vol. 9, No. 3, November 1957, p. 33, cites the following figures: September 1956, 197 ha.; March 1957, 146 ha. The *Polish Press Agency* Bulletin, No. 296, December 17, 1957, goes further: "The average size of the cooperative farms . . . at the end of 1956 was 146 hectares of arable land, it is now about 68 hectares."

[23] *Notes et Etudes Documentaires, prev. cit.,* p. 10.

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constant vigilance by party organs in the countryside, would be a guarantee against exploitation of the poor by the propertied. Still another rationalization has been offered in answer to Stalin's dogma (set forth in his *Problems of Leninism*) asserting the impossibility of basing Communist power, for any length of time, on the two different "pillars" of large-scale socialist industry and a scattered, individual peasant economy; it is argued that what matters is not the basic contradiction, but rather the extent of the contradiction, and that so long as the contradiction is held within reasonable bounds, so long as it does not become catastrophic, the building of socialism can continue.

While these strained interpretations of doctrine have produced a certain malaise among the party theoreticians, they provided a basis on which Mr. Gomulka could proceed to regularize the existing property structure in the Polish countryside. Although the agrarian reform of 1944 had distributed land among the peasants, the process of legalizing transfers of ownership had bogged down completely; at the end of 1956 recipients of over two-thirds of the holdings set up by the reform still lacked the necessary legal documents to guarantee their property right. The resulting confusion was compounded during the Six-Year Plan period by arbitrary measures which deprived many peasants of their land, by rural migration to the towns, and more recently by the sudden dissolution of thousands of *koklkozes.*

The proposed reforms stipulated, among other provisions, that only farmers could purchase land (exceptions were allowed in the case of workers' small plots, legacies and grants) and that any land purchased in excess of the statutory norms of 15-20 hectares would become state property. The solution of complicated property claims was adjudged a task of the utmost urgency; during the past year deeds of ownership were granted for 48,000 individual farms and were registered for an additional 19,000.[24] Apparently the regime has recognized that insecure ownership rights tend to slow down initiative more than the veiled threat of the theoreticians that in the undefined long run, socialized agriculture will come to stay.

Agricultural Investments

Agriculture—along with housing construction and the consumer goods industries—was the orphan of Poland's Six-Year Plan insofar as state investments were concerned. The share of agriculture in total gross investment in the period 1950-55 was only about 10 percent, compared to industry's 46 percent.[25] In the allotment of this meager ration, there was overwhelming discrimination against individual farms—considering the fact that they constituted the largest portion of total agricultural activity. The results of this policy were particularly noticeable in the deterioration of farm buildings, homes and equipment; between 1949 and 1955 a far-reaching decapitalization took place in the countryside, including the ruin or advanced dilapidation of approximately 8 percent of the rural dwelling space that had been avaliable in 1950.[26] The general climate of official hostility to the private sector discouraged personal investment in either maintenance or equipment to make up for state scrimping.

The plans of the new regime maintain—and in fact, slightly reduce—the low overall share of agriculture in centrally planned gross investments, laying stress instead on the encouragement of private investment through the increase of income in the countryside (such cuts as were made primarily affected the funds destined for state farms and machine stations). The increase in rural income was expected to result principally from the aforementioned abolition of compulsory milk deliveries, the reduction of delivery quotas for grain together with a rise in grain prices, the increased prices for sugar beets and wool, and the modification of progressive land taxes. Offsetting these boosts to income were planned increases in the prices which the peasants would have to pay for building materials, fertilizers and agricultural machinery. On balance, however, it was estimated that the gain in income would be sufficient to stimulate investment.

A Look at the Results

Considered as a whole—and disallowing the implicit and explicit contradictions noted above—Gomulka's agricultural program may be summarized as a policy of leaving the peasant alone to do his work. Has this retreat from dogma accomplished its ends? While it is too soon to judge the specific effects of various measures of the program, there is already much evidence showing encouraging results.

To use production as an index, the 1957 crop yield was the highest in the entire thirteen-year postwar period. Yields of the four principal crops—wheat, rye, barley and oats—amounted to 13.6 million tons, an increase of about 20 percent over the average for the period 1950-

[24] "Communique of the Central Statistics Office," *prev. cit.*, p. 10.

[25] ECE, *prev. cit.*, p. 24 (French text).

[26] W. Gomulka, speech to the VIII Plenum, *prev. cit.*, p. 3.

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55. In terms of yield per hectare, the 1957 average for these crops was 15 quintals, as compard to 14.3 in 1955 and 13.7 in 1956.[27] The yield of sugar beets exceeded the 1950-55 average by 20 percent and the 1956 crop by 27 percent. Production of milk was up 6 percent and animal products 8.5 percent over 1956. Although the potato yield was smaller than the 1956 bumper crop, it was 8 percent higher than the average for 1950-55.[28]

The renewal of the peasants' interest in their livelihood was evidenced in the increased demand for land reported last year, reversing a downward trend registered in the years 1948 to 1953. Reflecting this demand, land prices in the first half of 1957 averaged one-third higher than in 1956.[29] Application for credits also increased; in the course of 1957 individual peasant farms received 123 percent more long-term credits and 67 percent more short-term credits than in 1956.[30] Demand for agricultural machinery and artificial fertilizers also rose sharply; purchase of the latter for private farms increased 24 percent over 1956.[31]

Reports from Poland also indicate a considerable rise in the rural market for consumer goods and industrial products; the peasants were estimated to have spent some 4 billion *zlotys* more on such items in the first half of 1957 than in the corresponding months of 1956.[32]

[27] "Communique of the Central Statistics Office," *prev. cit.*
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *Polish Press Agency,* July 27, 1957.
[30] "Communique of the Central Statistics Office," *prev. cit.*
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Warsaw Radio,* July 29, 1957.

Impressive as these figures are, they are merely a reflection of something more important that has been happening in the Polish countryside. In spite of the continued propagation of the party line concerning class struggle in the countryside and the ultimate victory of communism in agriculture, a new spirit of confidence and of hope in the future of private farming has gradually manifested itself; it is still shaky and uncertain but it is there.

As testimony to this new attitude, for the first time since the end of the war the so-called Western Territories have been ploughed right up to the frontier. Pride of ownership—if only of a few hectares of mediocre soil—moved the peasants to accomplish in a few months what years of government pressure and party propaganda had failed to make them do. And throughout the country the peasants—left to themselves—have turned with a will to erecting new dwellings and outbuildings, to recreating cottage industries, and to tilling even the most marginal land.

Yet underneath all of these signs of renewed hope and vigor, there still persists the uneasy feeling that today's agricultural "amnesty" may be only a brief breathing spell between regime onslaughts. It will take many more months of "socialist" restraint to induce the peasants to believe that the past has been a bad dream; and indeed, as long as lip-service to doctrine continues, some fear must persist that the policy-makers have failed to draw a lasting lesson from their experiment in rural communism.

Poland's Angry and Un-angry Young Men

By George Sherman

POLISH YOUTH, who were in the vanguard of the near upheaval of October 1956, are now leaders in the disillusion and resignation of the country. The disillusion comes from frustrated hopes for dramatic change; the resignation, from recognition that the continued maintenance of the Communist facade is dictated by Poland's geographical vulnerability.

For the past two years, Mr. Sherman has been Central European correspondent for the London Observer, *travelling and writing extensively on Poland and other East European countries.*

"The outcome of the Polish October was determined by the Hungarian November," is how one student of the Warsaw Polytechnic explained the "facts of life" to this writer several months ago. He continued:

In October 1956 no one knew how the popular demonstrations would end, and we were desperate enough to fight for our rights. Then we saw what happened in Hungary. Now

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most people feel that nothing, absolutely nothing, must be done to weaken what limited independence and individual freedom we have achieved through Gomulka.

We were standing at the vodka-bar of the *Manekin,* an "existentialist" cellar opened last summer in the picturesque *Stare Miasto* section of Warsaw. A student coffee club occupies the first floor. Above that, the top stories house the now-famous KKK (Krzywe Kolo Klub), the "Crooked Circle" discussion club which led much of the intellectual ferment preceding Mr. Gomulka's return to power. The whole house taken together is a symbol of that new release from totalitarian control enjoyed by Polish youth.

The cellar is run by a group of student actors for their own profit. Once a week they perform original and not very good experimental plays on the barren, makeshift stage. At other times it serves as a dancing platform. Young couples—often chanting in unison to the American music now received without jamming over the radio—exhaust themselves improvising the gyrations demanded by the latest "rock and roll" and "calypso." They dress in "drain-pipe" trousers or tight skirts and knee socks, high neck pullovers, and long hair styles reminiscent of the Left Bank of Paris. The place is alive with the vitality and individuality of unrepressed youth. Soft lights, smoke-filled atmosphere, alcohol and intense conversation freely indulged—all within cold stone walls cleverly splashed with clashing color—lend the cellar its final "bohemian" touch.

Rather in contrast to the atmosphere, the student continued his sober explanation of the self-imposed restraint on political action. He cited the changed attitude toward *Po Prostu,* the student weekly whose outspoken criticism of tyranny and stagnation gained it such wide popularity before October 1956. "Of course, theoretically we all believe in freedom of the press," he began, "and we sympathized with the efforts of *Po Prostu* to keep things moving after October."

It appeared, however, that they also felt its radicalism, especially the back-handed criticism of Soviet Russia through the not-always subtle espousal of democratic principles, no longer suited to the times. He concluded emphatically:

***Po Prostu* went too far for our situation. It would have died a natural death through its loss of popularity. However, once the government did ban it last October, the so-called "*Po Prostu* riots" could have been avoided—if only the police had not moved so quickly and so brutally against the initial peaceful demonstrations.**

The writer gathered in talks with other students that this explanation generally summed up the prevailing attitude toward *Po Prostu* and its demise.

Now one of the young actor-proprietors joined our conversation. Earlier we had witnessed his group perform a new play so lost in abstruse symbolism as to be almost meaningless. There was little action, less plot, long and largely empty speeches, and in the end all of the five characters affirmed anew the loneliness selfishness and futility of life. "Socialist realism" with all its imposed strictures and golden adjectives about Communist life had indeed disappeared without a trace, but nothing coherent had taken its place.

"We know we are imitating Western experiments," the actor said in defense, "but we have to begin somewhere. Now that all imposed conformity has gone, we are looking for our own solutions. . . ." He paused, and after a moment's reflection, continued on a more general theme:

. . . And this search is going on in every field of life. After the horrors and trials of the German occupation, the postwar regime set out to destroy all our social ties—those with family, with Church, and with national tradition. Yet, the Communists have failed to replace these with meaningful ideals of their own. So what have we left?

My student friend jumped in swiftly with the answer —"Nothing."

The Onset of Pessimism

This search for wholly new solutions to life and society—begun with such enthusiasm even before October 1956—has noticeably degenerated during the past year. The independent discussion clubs of the "young intelligentsia," which were such hotbeds of radical talk and political action, have fallen from the scene entirely. The leading members rushed off to form revolutionary committees at the time of October. When the revolutionary tide ebbed, some students stayed on in the workers' councils or the official youth organizations which followed; most, however, have withdrawn after having their fingers burned at the hands of the locally-entrenched bureaucracy.

What remain are clubs of an entirely changed character. Though their number has increased—1500 now exist, many of them splinter groups of the old[1]—their interests have become for the most part social or educational, and highly specialized. They have become film clubs, modern art clubs, or simply discussion and dance

[1] Figure given in "The Future of Youth Clubs," *Sztandar Mlodych* (Warsaw), January 18-19, 1958.

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clubs. Many have been incorporated into the official youth movement as vehicles for spreading culture in the rural areas. Others—in the large cities—have fathered the "caves," cabarets and satirical theaters of the post-October period.[2]

Under mounting pressure from above for a return to Communist orthodoxy, the major segment of thinking youth has become pessimistic and lapsed into apathy. They feel that whatever their own conclusions, they are ultimately saddled with assets of intractable "official" beliefs supported by an alien system. Such enforced hypocrisy encourages indolence and irresponsibility beyond the bounds which might be considered a natural reaction to greater freedom of conduct. The resulting frustration—as well as a natural emotional let-down after months of abnormal absorption in politics—explains in large part the boredom about which many Polish youths complain today.[3] There are, as will later be shown, exceptions: some of the serious youth have shown signs of rejecting negativism, tiring of the "bohemian" life, and trying to find outlets for a more constructive and positive existence. The prevailing attitude, however, is what might be called a "credo of agnostic pessimism," simply but effectively expressed in the following lines of a reader's letter published in Warsaw's youth daily, *Sztandar Mlodych* (Banner of Youth):

I once had an idea but that collapsed. Now I just live and somehow time goes by. I no longer have use for ideas which were once supposed to decide my fate . . . I used to be very religious at one time; then I was a great Communist and patriot. But all that has vanished almost without trace now and I really do not feel the loss. I am convinced that feeding people ideas is always . . . of use only to a certain group. So it is better not to have any ideas . . . I am a pessimist. I live in the Atomic Age. Science is snatching up secrets of nature which . . . mostly serve to wipe out mankind . . . People around me look like hyenas—harassed, driven—but where? No goal lights the road of my life, I live for today . . .[4]

At the university level, intellectual "nihilism" has run rampant. Freedom has become license for everything "new and different." The passion for jazz ("this mad tempo permits me to forget everything"[5]), the unusual dress, the individual talent shows, the weird skits, the anecdotal conversation over empty coffee cups or vodka glasses in modernistic cafes—all reflect this twin mood of escapism and innovation.

Education and Employment Problems

The students have grudgingly returned to their long-neglected studies, but many adopt a "formal" attitude to their work. Several with whom the writer spoke said they wanted only to complete the requisite number of years for their diploma, and then if at all possible to emigrate westward. Typical was a remark by an architecture student:

What future is there for me here, where there still is no real competition of ideas for design? We still use a few set formulas, although they are no longer the "Stalinist" type. What they need are people to build, not to design buildings—so why give us an education?

The abolition of the pre-October state policy of compulsory three-year work assignments for all graduates, while a welcome move from the point of view of greater personal mobility, has in effect greatly accentuated the underemployment of the new intelligentsia. Of the 9,100 graduates in the autumn of 1957, 4000 were not able to find work in their profession.[6] They now have freedom to find their own jobs, but no place to exercise it. There are two main reasons. One is the "cult of incompetence" which keeps poorly or insufficiently educated people with political connections in responsible positions which should go to young and better trained graduates.[7] The second is a faulty educational policy which prepares students for specialized professions where there is no demand.

A survey for Warsaw in 1957 showed that for 380 graduates of architecture there were 32 jobs; for 740 law graduates, 220 jobs. On the other hand, there were only 265 graduates in the communications field for 524 jobs, and 94 graduates of finance for 685 jobs.[8] The fact that these imbalances are now officially out in the open and that the government has moved to rectify

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[4] February 15-16, 1958.

[2] *Cf.* "Polish 'Intelligentsia Clubs'," *East Europe,* Vol. 6, No. 9 (September 1957), pp. 15-26, for a well-documented account of the genesis, revolutionary role and metamorphosis of the discussion clubs.

[3] In a recent public opinion poll among 3,350 youths selected at random, 62 percent said they believed Polish youth to be "enveloped with boredom"; 47 percent had no ideal "in which it would be worthwhile to believe with full conviction." *Sztandar Mlodych,* February 8-9, 15-16, 1958.

[5] Taken from an earlier opinion poll in *Sztandar Mlodych,* March 23-24, 1957.

[6] Iza Marcisz, "Is There an Overproduction of the Intelligentsia?", *Dziennik Polski* (Warsaw), No. 279, November 23, 1957.

[7] *Ibid.* Statistics quoted.

[8] *Od Nowa,* Polish Students' Paper, Special International Edition, p. 4. (published by the Polish delegation to the Moscow Youth Festival, July-August 1957).

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them is of little help to the unemployed and alienated graduate or the undergraduate already advanced in his studies.

The new literature of "realism without adjectives" —led by the 26-year-old, self-made *"enfant terrible,"* Marek Hlasko—reflects youth's repudiation of all the old Communist clichés. It is bursting with the disillusionment of lost faith. With a style often compared to Hemingway, Hlasko and his school take the old themes —the life of the common worker and peasant—and drive with crude and unsparing language to the reality behind them. They display a talented sensitivity and deep sympathy for the people portrayed, and utter revulsion for the way of life forced upon them. Hlasko has categorically condemned the fraudulent idealism of "socialist realism" for glorifying a "never-never" land according to political dictate:

Warsaw, the city of my youth, will always be for me the city in which people have no lodgings, and are embittered; a city without songs, in which a drunkard rolls in the street, where people beat each other. It would be comic if I were to describe it in another way. I am no cynic; only the literature of socialist realism was cynical.[9]

The baser evils of this disintegration of Polish society are having their most devastating effect on younger teenagers—those who are beginning secondary education or who have already gone to work. They are led to indulge in vice and violence bred in the corruption around them. The number of juvenile crimes has risen steeply; in 1957 it reached 10,000 for Warsaw alone.[10] This "hooliganism" has become so widespread and vicious that the Sejm (national parliament) has enacted a law raising attendant penalties, expediting legal pro-

[9] Radio interview reported in *Zycie Warszawy,* March 4, 1958. It is indicative of the independence of present Polish literature that Hlasko's first collection of short stories, *The First Step in the Clouds,* was awarded the much coveted Polish Publishers' Award for 1957, despite heavy criticism by leading "old guard" critics.

[10] *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw) January 15, 1958.

rys. Stanisław Zagórski

— Znowu coś piszą o nas...

SZPILKI ON YOUTH

—Again they're writing something about us . . .

(Two men at bottom right are holding the book, *The Sexual Life of Savages,* by the Polish-British anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski).

—From Szpilki (Warsaw), December 1, 1957.

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cedures and giving added "legal protection" for police enforcement.[11] A film, "The Lost Feeling"—released in October 1957 and promptly confiscated by the censors for its "negative" portrayal of Polish life—showed this juvenile delinquency for what it is: the cancer of an underpaid, overworked "socialist" society, where family ties are strained at every turn, and survival is often dependent upon bribery and theft. With the breakdown of morality and idealism, these strains are kept less in check than ever.

The Youth Groups—An Index of Attitudes

In this atmosphere the Communist-controlled youth organizations glide helplessly over the surface of life. The regime is caught between its desire to reengage the youth in "healthy" political activity and its determination to avoid the old methods of crude compulsion. The youth on their side are adamant about never becoming victims of fraudulent Communist "front" organizations. They are almost aggressively apolitical. Although they still profess interest in politics, they have assumed the posture of spectators on the side-lines.[12]

Recruitment figures reflect this political lethargy. Two political youth organizations have replaced the "Stalinist" ZMP (Union of Polish Youth), which at the time of its demise in October 1956 claimed 2,000,000 members. The two new groups are the ZMS (Union of Socialist Youth) for students and workers, and the ZMW (Union of Rural Youth) for the countryside.

After one year of life, the ZMS has organized 90,000 members into 5,000 groups; 68 percent of the members are said to be workers as against only "a few thousand" students.[13] At the time of the *Po Prostu* riots in October 1957, the Minister for Higher Education admitted there were exactly 12 ZMS members among the 14,000 students at the Warsaw Polytechnic;[14] two of these were subsequently expelled for organizing the first student demonstrations.

The ZMW has not fared much better, mainly because of a lack of previous organization in the neglected countryside and the great distances separating its members and groups. Moreover, the rural populace feels a deep-seated suspicion of any Communist-led "socialist" organization, despite the ZMW's outspoken support of Mr. Gomulka's decollectivization of agriculture in favor of voluntary cooperatives or individual farming.[15] Out of an estimated 3,000,000 youths sprinkled over the countryside, it has organized only 120,000 members in some 7,000 circles.[16]

In contrast, the non-political national youth organizations have swollen memberships. The Polish Scout movement (ZHP)—long suppressed under the Stalinist regime—has now been completely rehabilitated, and as of December 1, 1957, claimed 700,000 members.[17] It works with youth below the age of 18, has the same objectives as scout movements in the West, and has steered clear of any political entanglements. The other important non-political organization is the ZSP (Association of Polish Students), a student trade union which claims a membership of 100,000 and whose leadership, within the limits of its functions, provides one of the rare examples of more positive thinking and action among the youth; more will be said about this organization shortly.

The problems of the ZMS (Union of Socialist Youth) worry the regime most, for it works among the most hostile and potentially active section of the youth. This organization simply cannot escape from the shadow of its Stalinist predecessor. By the time the former ZMP collapsed in October 1956, it had become a hated tool of state indoctrination. It had monopoly control over all activities of young people, including their private lives. In the end it achieved a purely mechanical unity which fell apart once the mainstays of fear and bureaucracy vanished. Consequently, Mr. Gomulka's protégé, the ZMS, is in the unenviable position of espousing the same overall ends while repudiating the methods of the ZMP.[18]

The ZMS has been further weakened by a bitter internal struggle. It is almost an exact replica of the contest within the parent United Workers' Party (Communist) between the "revisionists," who want to expand basic democratic reforms, and the "dogmatists," who yearn for the old security of unyielding dictatorship. The

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[11] *Ibid.*, December 6, 1957.

[12] *Cf.* results of the above-mentioned opinion poll, *Sztandar Mlodych,* March 23-24, 1957. Reprinted in English in *East Europe,* Vol. 6, No. 8, August 1957. *Cf.* also *Zycie Warszawy,* No. 36, February 11, 1958.

[13] Speech by Marian Renke, First Secretary of the ZMS Central Committee, *Trybuna Ludu,* December 10, 1957.

[14] *Sztandar Mlodych,* October 23, 1957.

[15] Interview with Deputy Chairman and Secretary of the ZMW, *Zycie Warszawy,* February 8, 1958.

[16] *Trybuna Ludu,* January 31, 1958.

[17] *Argumenty* (Journal of the Union of Non-Believers), Warsaw, December 1, 1957.

[18] *Cf.* the burning indictment of the ZMP by Henryk Kollat, "In the Wake of the Polish Youth Movement," *Young Poland,* No. 1-2, January 1957, p. 7, published in English in Warsaw. Its contents are best judged by the fact that the regime never allowed later numbers of the journal to be published.

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forces supporting Mr. Gomulka—who aim more at a change in the *practice* of communism than in its theory—occupy a somewhat nebulous center position, but nevertheless prevail. Thus far they have triumphed in the ZMS as well as in the party.

What has resulted is an organization explicitly under the "ideological and political" supervision of the regime-line Communists.[19] Through this subordination it has lost the support of the founding revolutionary committees of students and workers, who during the first months of 1957 lost the struggle for their own autonomy and for the independence of the national organization. Not uncommonly, these groups' long-range programs for democracy were coupled with explosive anti-Russian slogans.[20] Now the fixed aim of the ZMS is the political education of youth in the "construction of socialism," and for this task all old activists of the ZMP are accepted—provided they change their methods of work. Not empty slogans, not pat formulas, but "good works" are calculated to win back the mass of young people.[21]

In frank recognition that the students are lost for the time-being, all concentration now is on the young workers. However, even in the factories there is lack of enthusiasm; as the leading youth activist at *Nowa Huta*—Poland's largest steel mill located outside Cracow—put it to this writer, "The ZMS feels like a band of missionaries who must convert the natives of their own village. . . ."

A Brighter Side of the Picture

If the present situation among the youth seems to reflect discouragement and lack of direction, there are nevertheless elements in the picture which suggest a potentiality for change. Despite the steady reimposition of Communist control over all political activity—and the apathy among the youth which must tolerate this fact of Polish life—the Gomulka government on its part has tolerated, and in many cases even encouraged, developments in other areas of activity which have resulted in the shattering of the monolithic society from below. Nihilism and immorality—the first reaction to political disillusionment—do not show signs of becoming a permanent way of life. The extent and number of other changes in the society, plus the new psychology of mutual toleration beween regime and populace, do more than act as a brake against a return to totalitarianism: they pose the far-reaching question—what will be the future character of communism in Poland?

Education has been returned to the guiding hands of educators. Students are no longer treated as military recruits subject to the discipline and indoctrination of the ranks. "Class warfare" in education has been eliminated; selection for entrance and scholarships is now judged completely on the basis of merit.[22] Uninhibited student exchanges with the West have begun in earnest.[23] The study of Marxism-Leninism is voluntary, and the former requirement of compulsory attendance at lectures has been abolished. The curricula have been vastly broadened to give the individual more opportunity to study outside his particular specialty.[24] The practice of requiring passes and identification cards for movement in and out of university buildings has been abandoned, and there are no longer curfew hours in the student hostels. All this academic change both reflects and fosters the new atmosphere of student life in Poland, in which nonconformity has become the rule rather than the exception.

The Influence of Religion

In the lower schools, religious instruction by the Catholic clergy has been reintroduced as a voluntary subject. Since Poland is 90 percent Catholic, this concession has signalled the return of Catholicism to the public school system.

However, the overall role of the Catholic Church in the life of youth remains equivocal. The new religious freedom has not meant a return of the Church's organized influence in secular society. Only five or six of the 25 independent Catholic discussion clubs formed immediately after October have been officially recognized. One group, a Christian Democratic student club which sprang up in Warsaw, has been suppressed since Janu-

[19] First Secretary Renke's speech to the Third Plenum of ZMS Central Committee, *loc. cit.*, December 10, 1957.

[20] *Cf.* "On the Path to Uniformity," *Walka Mlodych* (Warsaw), No. 26, November 26-December 2, 1957. This is the theoretical weekly of the ZMS.

[21] Speech of Communist First Secretary Gomulka to the ZMW Congress, *Trybuna Ludu,* February 27, 1958.

[22] Almost 50 percent of all students in higher education today come from the "working intelligentsia." Statistics on the democratization of education were cited by Minister of Higher Education Zoliewski in a speech to the Third Congress of the ZSP, reported on Polish Radio Home Service, December 21, 1957.

[23] Forty Polish youths are studying in the United States this year on Ford Foundation grants, 15 on Rockefeller Foundation grants. Rockefeller Foundation has announced the selection of 50 students for grants in the coming academic year.

[24] The sudden relaxation of discipline in studies has led to a temporary lowering of educational standards, and there is a move to reimpose some set subjects for the first two years of higher education; *cf.* "A Student's Voice," *Sztandar Mlodych,* January 8, 1958.

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Drunk in The Afternoon

by Marek Hlasko

NOTE: *The short story "Drunk in the Afternoon," by the talented young Polish* avant-garde *writer Marek Hlasko, an excerpt of which is offered below, appeared first in the now banned student weekly* Po Prostu *of September 25, 1955. The scene is Praga, a suburb of Warsaw; the time—an afternoon on a hot April day. A wretched drunk lies sprawled on the ground, and a group of people has gathered.*

The man who used to meet the drunk in the saloon "Sailor's Haven" said to the man with a snake tattoo:

"This man was a good fellow once upon a time. Before the war he worked on streetcars; he organized a strike there, too. During the occupation he used to hide people in his place—he had a whole batch of Jews there, and laughed at the Germans. He used to tell us: 'Just you wait and see how we'll never lack anything. There will be no poverty—we'll never *know* poverty. We'll make up for all the damned suffering we've ever known. . . . All we have to do is to wait'."

"I know what happened next," said the short man with the tatooed snake. "Next came victory. And you had to kill yourself for everything, work like you've never worked before, grit your teeth and hold your tongue. Others managed to get up in the world somehow—but he lagged behind. Maybe he wasn't smart enough, maybe he just didn't understand enough? Finally he couldn't stand it any longer: he began saying one thing to his wife at night, and something else at executive meetings. Then he began to be afraid."

"Right," said the drunk's friend—"then he began to be afraid. He was afraid that they'd finally understand what kind of a party man he really was. And he lived in fear and nothing else. He didn't understand the party."

"A party man," said the man with the snake, "who nurses his doubts behind the party's back quickly turns into a heap of cowardly dung. He had a small heart and few hopes. Few desires, too: fear replaced desires, as he saw how people suffered. There are people who think that all that's happening in this country is happening in their conscience, and at the expense of their conscience. This one here was one of them: he had a tiny heart, and that's why he's lying here, drunk like an old whore on Holy Thursday. Then they threw him out of the party."

"How do you know this?" said the drunk's friend.

"I was the one who proposed that he be thrown out," said the man with the snake. "I met him one evening. He kept grasping my arm and saying: 'Why is it that happiness lives so far away? When will we get there? We'll keep walking, gritting our teeth, days often turning into nights, but when we finally do arrive there, will we have the strength to smile? No: we'll just be tired as all hell. After a huge effort even success looks like a nightmare.' 'Fine,' I say to him, 'there's a meeting tomorrow: you'll get up and say all this. What the hell is the point of keeping it all bottled up? Everybody is damned tired but you mustn't keep silent. Silence is not golden. Silence is a rotten lie. Silence is the rottenest of all lies.' He looked at me queerly; I never saw such a look. He burst into a stupid laughter, and said: 'What's the matter with you? I was only joking. I only wanted to see whether you're a good party man. Because lately you've somehow . . .' I let him have it in the nose. He wiped off the blood, and fell silent."

The man with the snake ceased talking. He laughed briefly and unpleasantly.

"Why the devil are you laughing?" said the friend of the drunk.

"Because I know," said the short man with the snake, "I know that eventually I'll see all these characters sprawled out like this one. A party man who does not keep in step with the party, must turn into a type like this one. Are you leaving already?"

"Yes," said the friend of the drunk. "What's the point of standing around here? We can't help him anyhow."

They walked on the street. The trees, covered with dust, looked ugly and dejected. At the corner a thin man in a dirty apron was selling ice cream surrounded by a throng of children, the dissolving ice cream kept running down their fingers. They squealed, the change rattling in their outstretched hands. . . .

They walked on. The acquaintance of the drunk kept whistling, and the short man walked in silence, nervously moving his jaws. At one point he stopped.

"Damn it, I forgot," he said, looking nervously at the other. "I must turn back: my woman asked me to see my mother-in-law. It's in the other direction."

"It's all right," said the other, "I would wait for you, but I am in a hurry, too. See you"—he raised his fingers to his cap and left.

When he disappeared at the corner, the short man went back to the drunk. He bent over him, and pulled him up, breathing heavily; the drunk lay on his arm like a lifeless sack. The short man led him on, saying sadly:

"*Why* did you get drunk? *Why* did you get drunk in the middle of the afternoon?"

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ary 1957 as "reactionary." Any united Catholic organization which could rival the Communists among the youth remains strictly forbidden.

Among a certain element of the youth—including many with whom the writer spoke during the past year—there is a feeling that Catholic dogma is outdated for Poland in its present condition; this attitude stems in part from a belief that the Church as an institution has shared responsibility for Poland's traditional economic and social backwardness. For the great majority of the population, however, the Catholic Church remains the one force in the country with genuine appeal. The forward-looking Primate, Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski, enjoys immense and entirely unblemished prestige. He and his disciples—both in and outside the clergy—are using this power to preach the value of hard work, integrity and social cooperation in resurrecting the strength of Poland. It is an unspectacular but in its own way constructive policy which avoids any head-on clash with the alien ideology of the state. In fact, this call for common sense and morality coincides exactly with Gomulka's repeated pleas for "more work, less talk." Some of the serious youth show increasing signs of responding to the cumulative appeal, wearied as they are of politics, and equally tired and frustrated by the present chaos of their lives.

Crosscurrents of Thought

What final effect this stabilizing pressure will have on youth is hard to gauge in view of the complex pulls in their lives today. Beneath the surface nihilism and license which characterize youth attitudes, there are also other trends, but they mix with one another in the most contradictory fashion. Socialism, chauvinism, and a new "positivism" are their three main ingredients.

The kind of *socialism* advocated by young Poles has little to do with Soviet communism, which has lost whatever vestige of idealistic appeal it might have had after twelve years of practice in Poland. The students want a "humanized" socialism with roots in the Polish national consciousness, not the Russian. They are set against the prewar "capitalist" system, which they say was based on economic and political injustice, and they affirm the basic merits of a system which has supplied them with a free education. Whatever label is applied to this type of thought, it surely suggests a certain conversion to the democratic values of the West, and also blends with the attitudes of so-called Polish "revisionism." It shows a willingness to consider every idea on its merit for possible retention in the "Polish model of socialism."

Some youths who call themselves "realists" assert that the *practice*—if not the theory—of the Gomulka dictatorship corresponds as closely to this conception of socialism as is possible under present circumstances. As one young optimist explained the present situation:

Never forget it was Communists—many of us young—who led the revolt against Stalinism. Gomulka has gone only so far, but that is far enough so that neither we nor the people can be silenced again. True, there is not political freedom, but there is more democracy. It is these concessions to the people—religious freedom, decollectivization of agriculture, freedom from fear, and freedom of discussion—which are the safety valves upon which Gomulka's power depends.

The element of *chauvinism* in youth attitudes is generally linked with outspoken anti-communism, which in turn is buttressed by a deep hostility toward Russia rooted far back in history. The Catholic Church—which is both anti-Communist and traditionally nationalistic—stimulates this mood, no matter how much its present leaders try to direct it into constructive channels. The Church is still the embodiment of the deep national conscience of a highly sensitive people. The chauvinism manifested is utterly emotional, utterly destructive, bred by the country's revulsion against an imposed foreign way of life.

On the other hand, this chauvinism is also fed by a certain disenchantment with the West, now that utopian concepts of western life, myths born during years of enforced isolation, give way to the reality of direct contact. Released from long repression, in search of "life" as it should be lived, the youth turned to jazz, "taschist" art (the latest extension of abstractionist painting), and the general ""bohemian" existence as outward expressions of the freedom so long craved. Yet they have not found the quick answers they sought; they skimmed the surface of Western culture and missed the real Western answer to communism—the subtle strength of the "pluralistic" society.

Several thousand during the past year have made use of the new opportunity for brief tours in the West. They are duly overwhelmed by the material prosperity, but they understand nothing of the values behind it. They are poor, they cannot afford what they now can touch, so they reject it, and more—they begin to hate it as much as that order at home which denies them the means for having it. In these circumstances, "love of Poland" becomes more than a patriotic abstraction; it is a psychological necessity.

In contrast, *positivism* is a more sober attitude toward general living. It is a mood. It has no organization, no specific program. It is often accompanied by a strong streak of puritanism, the natural reaction against

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the present waywardness and anarchy of Polish life. It is a more subtle approach to politics, a movement away from dramatic solutions. It is the belief that the decayed structure of Polish life must be repaired from the ground up, through the renewal of family and community life, through a basic honesty in all personal contacts. Practicing young Catholics are among those who manifest this type of idealism, comparing it to the "positivism" which allowed Poland to survive as a nation and to flourish as a culture during her long partition between Prussia, Russia and Austria in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The movement is not limited to Catholic circles, however. In the spring of 1957 *Po Prostu* noted that already some of the disillusioned leaders of the pre-October ferment were returning from their "internal emigration" of "bridge-playing and coffee-drinking." Declaring that no active person could tolerate the "mess and human misery" around him, the journal went on to say that local action toward constructive ends was now the most useful type of politics in Poland.[25] It is basically this attitude which also underlies the "good works" approach of the newly-converted ZMS-activist.

Yet at the moment, the real stronghold of this "positivism" is the one independent organization which has genuine nation-wide support from the students—the aforementioned Association of Polish Students (ZSP). It is a purely student trade union, organized by students for students to improve their economic, cultural and social condition. For years it suffered under the domination of the Stalinist ZMP, but as that organization declined the ZSP gained proportionately in power and popularity. Immediately after October 1956 it revised its statutes, declared its independence under the guise of supporting the amorphous "National Unity Front," and by the end of 1957 claimed 100,000 members out of the estimated 130,000 students in Poland.[26]

During the past year there have been recurrent attacks on the "antipolitical" attitude of the ZSP, coupled with menacing rumbles about closer "coordination" with the Communist-run ZMS. The ZSP has countered this criticism by pointing to its zealous support of the "National Unity Front" in the local and national elections.[27] At the same time, the Association has maintained that such political action is only *one* of its tasks in furthering student interests, and its argument seems to have carried the day.[28] The ZSP emerged from its large national congress in December 1957 with its independence still intact; the Communists have had to accept a loose "All-Polish Cooperation Committee of Youth Organizations," through which discussion and coordination of activities take place, but in which each group retains its independence of initiative.[29]

The success of the ZSP is attributable to the fact that from the start it recognized the limitations on its field of maneuver. Its work has been undramatic, but has concentrated precisely on those areas most vital to its members' well-being. It arranges student exchanges and tourism, has taken over student canteen and restaurant concessions, and put forward proposals for a reorganization of the state scholarship system. It has taken the lead in helping graduates and students to find work.

Most important of all, beneath all this activity lies a really democratic organization. Free debates and elections are conducted among the members. In the Gdansk Polytechnic Institute (the largest school on the Baltic coast), a genuine student parliament has been established with tremendous response from the student body. It constitutes representative self-government, including a responsible executive committee, ten "parliamentary" commissions to supervise specific ZSP tasks, and a student court. Judging from the publicity and praise given this "experiment," such student parliaments may well spread throughout Poland.[30]

Quiet optimism pervaded all of the writer's conversations with ZSP leaders. They have assumed a special attitude toward the dictum "more work, less talk" which may portend well for the future.

"All right, let shoemakers make shoes, and politicians make politics," said one of the representatives. "We know we have no choice. But we do have a feeling of freedom around us, and that is what we wanted most. Now we are using it where we can." Then, with a meaningful smile, he added: "Perhaps we have our own workshop here—the workshop of democracy!"

Whether this attitude will spread to a significant sector of thinking youth, gradually dispelling the prevailing mood of disillusionment and resignation, is impossible to tell at this juncture. But at least the slow road of step-by-step advance toward limited goals, frustrating as it may be, helps a portion of the youth to keep up their hopes for the eventual realization of a fuller life and a freer Poland.

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[25] *Po Prostu,* May 12, 1957.

[26] Figures quoted to the author at ZSP headquarters in Warsaw, January 1958.

[27] Interview with S. Olszowski, President of ZSP, *Sztandar Mlodych,* November 25, 1957.

[28] "Association Nevertheless," *Tygodnik Powszechny,* January 19, 1958.

[29] *Zycie Warszawy,* February 10, 1958.

[30] *Cf. Sztandar Mlodych,* November 15, December 11, 1957.

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The "Democratic Parties": End of an Experiment?

By Harold C. Hinton

ALTHOUGH government by a Communist-led coalition of "democratic parties" is a common feature both of the East European satellite systems and of Maoist China's "people's democratic dictatorship," probably no Communist party has applied this formula for the masked exercise of single-party rule so assiduously and effectively as have the Chinese Communists. During 1957, however, the purges of Chinese democratic party leaders which marked the CPC's all-out "rectification" and "anti-rightist" drives clearly exposed the false pretense of shared authority and called into question the whole future of the democratic parties' "co-existence" as allies of the CPC. It is timely, therefore, to review the evolution of this feature of Maoist rule, particularly as it clarifies the implications and dangers of the "parliamentary path to socialism" currently stressed in Communist world strategy.

The United Front as a Means to Power

Essentially, the Chinese formula for wielding power through a multi-party "democratic front" merely carries over into the present transitional stage of China's socialist revolution the basic elements of the old "united front" strategy as applied by Mao Tse-tung in the conquest of power. Mao enunciated this strategy for China in 1935, when he discerned in the promotion of a broad popular movement of national resistance to Japan the best means of expanding Communist influence and accomplishing the eventual overthrow of the Kuomintang. Addressing a conference of party cadres, he declared:

The task of the party is to form a united national revolutionary front by integrating the activities of the Red Army with all the activities of the workers, peasants, students, petty bourgeoisie, and the national bourgeoisie of the whole country.[1]

Just as the timing of this pronouncement reflected the current international strategy of Moscow, so Mao's version of the united front was not original. The idea had first stemmed from Lenin, under whose influence the Second Comintern Congress of 1920 had directed Communist parties in "colonial and semi-colonial" countries to enter into alliance with "national revolutionary" elements, including both the peasantry and such elements of the bourgeoisie as were opposed to Western "imperialism."[2] In line with the Comintern directive, the newborn Chinese Communist Party had bodily joined the Kuomintang, enabling Stalin to define the latter, in 1926, as a "bloc of four classes"—"workers, peasants, intelligentsia, and urban petty bourgeoisie."[3] This early united front collapsed, however, and it remained for Mao to revive, broaden, and apply the concepts of Lenin and Stalin to China with a skill and flexibility peculiarly his own.

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[1] "On the Tactics of Fighting Japanese Imperialism," December 27, 1935, in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,* International Publishers, New York, 1954. Vol. I, p. 163.

[2] "Theses on the National and Colonial Questions" adopted by the Second Congress of the Communist International, 1920, quoted in X. J. Eudin and R. C.. North, *Soviet Russia and the East, 1920-27: A Documentary Survey,* Stanford University Press, 1959, p. 65.

[3] "Theses on the Chinese Question" of the Sixth Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, February 17 to March 15, 1926, *loc. cit.,* p. 347.

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In Mao's hands, the united front strategy proved to be a weapon of enormous value to the Chinese Communists, exceeded in importance only by armed struggle. During the period leading up to the 1937 outbreak of war with Japan, it enabled them to pose as the principal champions of national unity against aggression. Again, after 1945, it helped them to isolate the Kuomintang and to render large numbers of people, especially among the intellectuals, the liberally inclined elements of the bourgeoisie, and the peasants, first benevolently neutral, then actively sympathetic toward the Communists.[4]

MEANWHILE, as early as 1939, Mao's writings began to indicate that the united front principle would still be applied after the Communists had gained control of the state. The next stage of the Chinese revolution, he announced, would be functionally equivalent to the orthodox Marxist "bourgeois democratic" stage, but it would be of a new type which he called "new democracy." Its form, Mao explained, would be neither a bourgeois dictatorship nor a pure proletarian dictatorship, but rather "a dictatorship of the united front of all revolutionary classes under the leadership of the proletariat" —this last term clearly implying control by the Communist Party as the Leninist "vanguard of the proletariat."[5] Soon afterward, Mao defined the "revolutionary classes" as consisting primarily of the proletariat, the peasantry, and the petty bourgeoisie (including intellectuals). The national bourgeoisie might also be allowed to participate, he indicated, but it had a dual or vacillating character and consequently was capable of either supporting the revolution or opposing it.[6]

Mao's formulation of the united front under "new democracy" was, of course, couched in typical Marxist terms of social classes rather than political parties. It is not difficult, however, to translate his "revolutionary classes" into general party terms. Obviously, the Communist Party would be exclusively entitled to represent the proletariat; and the same would undoubtedly hold for the peasantry in view of the fact that the CPC, during Mao's ascendancy (after 1935), had laid particular stress on making itself the champion of the peasant cause. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that any non-Communist parties to be admitted to the future united front would be organs of the bourgeoisie, either petty or national.[7] (This has, in fact, been the case since 1949.)

Though military allies against Japan, the Communists and the Kuomintang remained political enemies. Consequently, in the hope of securing an opening wedge—at no further cost in blood—toward the realization of his 1939 blueprint for a "new democracy" under proletarian (CPC) leadership, Mao in 1944-45 made new united front overtures to the Kuomintang, proposing the creation of a unified "provisional democratic coalition government" for all of China, embracing all parties and groups including the Communists.[8] The postwar negotiations for this purpose collapsed, however, and the Communists reverted to the ultimate weapon of armed struggle.

The United Front in the Exercise of Power

Mao again turned to the question of the future political structure and program in 1949, not long before the formal establishment of Communist rule. The structure itself, though remaining essentially that of "new democracy," was now given the more pronouncedly Leninist label of "people's democratic dictatorship." At the same time, the program became more avowedly Stalinist in that it envisaged the three main essentials of Stalin's formula for "socialism in one country": collectivization of agriculture, the building up of heavy industry, and establishment of a party-controlled police state.

In theory, ruling power was to be exercised by "the people," defined by Mao as a united front of the proletariat, peasantry, petty bourgeoisie, and national bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the proletariat.[9] Although still regarded as vacillating, the national bourgeoisie (mainly private businessmen and capitalists, excluding those tainted by connections with foreign capital) was evidently considered indispensable to economic progress, and therefore included among "the people." Mao again made scarcely any reference to the non-Com-

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[4] Chiang Kai-shek himself has acknowledged that an important reason for the Kuomintang's defeat was its failure to conciliate middle-of-the-road and moderately leftist opinion, thus facilitating Communist inroads among these groups. *Soviet Russia in China: A Summing-Up at Seventy,* Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, New York, 1957, p. 220.

[5] "The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party," December 1939, in *Selected Works, op. cit.,* Vol. III, pp. 96-7.

[6] "On New Democracy," January 1940, *ibid.,* p. 118.

[7] It is interesting to note, in this connection, that no Social Democratic or peasants' Smallholders Party has ever existed in China.

[8] "On Coalition Government," April 1945, in *Selected Works, op. cit.,* Vol. IV, pp. 244, 271.

[9] "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," July 1949, in C. Brandt, B. Schwartz, and J. K. Fairbank, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism,* Harvard University Press, 1952, p. 456.

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munist "democratic parties" then in existence.[10] While their place in the new structure thus remained uncertain, it was at least a reasonable inference that the bourgeois elements taken into the united front would enjoy some kind of political representation, though this would presumably last only until full "proletarian dictatorship" or socialism was achieved.

Mao's designation of the new structure by the term "people's democratic dictatorship" instead of "people's democracy," the accepted Soviet term applied to the East European satellite regimes, was evidently deliberate and had significant theoretical as well as practical implications. These become clearer in the light of the change in the Soviet definition of "people's democracy" which came in 1948. Prior to 1948, Soviet theorists held that the East European satellites were under "proletarian hegemony" but not under "proletarian dictatorship"—the distinction evidently reflecting the considerable degree of political autonomy left to the non-Communist democratic parties in the 1945-48 period. With the virtual elimination of these parties as independent organs after 1948, however, Moscow redefined "people's democracy" as equivalent to "proletarian dictatorship," though in an early phase corresponding to the NEP period (1921-28) in the Soviet Union. Thus, Mao's careful avoidance of both these latter terms in favor of his own "people's democratic dictatorship" implied that the Chinese Communists' projected structure would—at least in theory—diverge from the post-1948 Soviet satellite pattern in the sense of greater political participation for the non-proletarian (non-Communist) elements of the united front.[11]

A FIRST STEP toward reconciliation of this theoretical difference was taken in September 1954, when the preamble to the new Chinese Communist constitution equated the concepts of "people's democracy" and "new democracy" (still used interchangeably with "people's democracy dictatorship"). In February 1956, a still closer reconciliation was made possible by Soviet statements at the Twentieth CPSU Congress which, in effect, invited the CPC to interpret the term "dictatorship of the proletariat" as it liked, as long as it recognized its applicability to China.[12] This the CPC did in its first published statement on the question of "destalinization" (*Jen-min jih-pao,* April 5, 1956). Again, in September 1956, Liu Shao-ch'i, next to Mao the leading party theoretician, told the CPC Eighth Congress that people's democratic dictatorship, "in its essence, can only be the dictatorship of the proletariat."[13]

Lest this be interpreted as spelling the impending elimination of the non-Communist minor parties and the end of the united front, however, Liu added that the latter would continue to exist. Even more, the CPC began about this time to propagate the line that its relations with the minor parties would be governed by the principle of "long-term co-existence and mutual supervision." Indeed, a *Jen-min jih-pao* editorial on the opening day of the Eighth Congress (September 15, 1956) went so far as to indicate that co-existence would continue even beyond the attainment of socialism. "So long as the Communist Party exists," it unequivocally stated, "the other democratic parties will continue to exist."

The Democratic Parties in Practice

From all this it is obvious that the Chinese Communist leadership has deemed it of the utmost importance to establish and maintain the facade of a multi-class and multi-party united front to conceal the reality of single-party totalitarian dictatorship. There are a number of reasons for this. First of all, an outright betrayal of Mao's democratic promises made to the Chinese people before 1949 would have done the CPC much more harm than good: it sorely needed, and still needs, the intellectual, financial, administrative and other skills possessed by many non-Communists. Also, the party stood to gain public confidence by enlisting the collaboration, through the medium of the united front, of already known and respected democratic party figures; and the inclusion of bourgeois elements in the "ruling" coalition had the advantage of associating them with the planned socialization of the economy and thus putting them in the position of serving as their own grave-diggers. Finally, preservation of the united front has offered a standing, if illusory, assurance to the Kuomintang on Taiwan and to overseas Chinese generally that there

[10] There were several small moderate parties in Kuomintang China, grouped together in a loose coalition known as the Democratic League. Because of the pro-Communist inclinations of most of these parties, the Kuomintang government outlawed the League in 1947, charging that it had "linked with the Communists and joined the rebellion." Two small parties were exempted from the ban and are still in existence on Taiwan.

[11] *Cf.* Benjamin Schwartz, "China and the Soviet Theory of People's Democracy," *Problems of Communism,* No. 5, 1954, pp. 8-15.

[12] Benjamin Schwartz, "New Trends in Maoism?" *Problems of Communism,* No. 4, 1957, p. 5.

[13] New China News Agency (hereafter NCNA), Peiping dispatch, September 16, 1956.

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is a place for non-Communists in the public life of the "New China."

If the number of "democratic party" organizations were a reliable criterion of their political role, that role would be not just theoretically but actually much greater than in the East European satellites. There are no less than eight minor party organizations which have "accepted the leadership" of the CPC and, in return, are recognized by it:

1. The Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang, formed at Hong Kong early in 1948 by political defectors from the Kuomintang.

2. The China Democratic League, descended from the old Democratic League in Kuomintang China, which was outlawed by the National Government in 1947 (see f.n. 10). Composed largely of intellectuals and organized at Hong Kong in January 1948, it is the most important of the minor parties.

3. The China Democratic National Construction Association, a descendant of one of the component groups of the old Democratic League, and composed of businessmen.

4. The Chinese Peasants and Workers Democratic Party, in reality a misnomer since its members are largely intellectuals, also descended from a component of the old Democratic League.

5. The China Association for Promoting Democracy, another liberal intellectual group, formed in 1946.

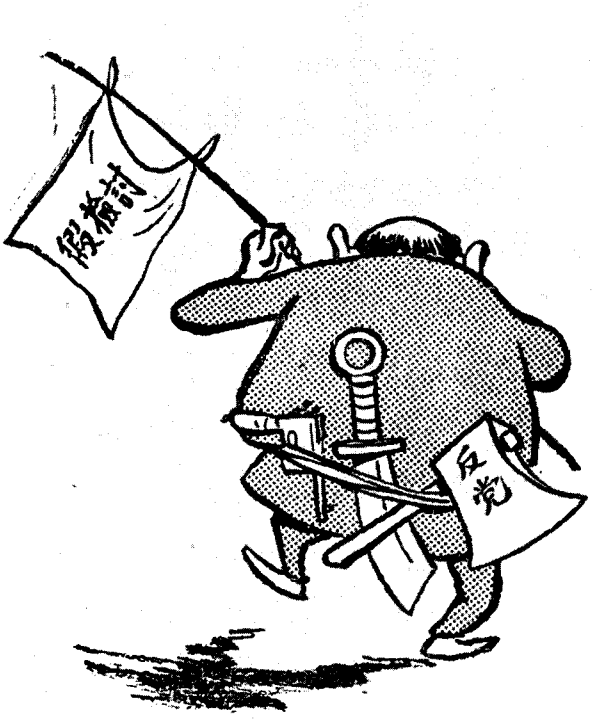
6. The China *Chih Kung Tang,* in effect a reorganized Chinese branch of an older, now defunct organization of overseas Chinese.

7. The *Chiu San* (September 3rd) Society, an intellectual group formed in 1946.

8. The Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League, an organization of Taiwanese living in Communist China.[14]

Little has been published in Chinese Communist sources regarding the exact size of these organizations, but their memberships are known to be small. Soon after the new regime was installed, the CPC forbade them to try to build up a mass following, and in 1951 it specified the groups from which each might recruit members. Minor party members are not encouraged—and probably not even allowed—to join the CPC; but the latter, on the contrary, can and does plant its own members, both overt and covert, in the minor party organizations to watch over their activities. (This last revelation, again referred to later, came to light during the 1957 "rectification" campaign.)

THERE ARE three principal power structures in Communist China: the CPC, the governmental apparatus and the armed forces. From the first—and also the most important—of these, the minor parties are excluded by definition; in the other two, however, they have been accorded a numerically prominent, though actually not very influential, place. In 1949, half of the vice-chairmanships and ordinary seats on the Central People's Government Council (CPGC), then the highest governmental body, were awarded to leading minor party figures and a sprinkling of persons without party affiliation. In the Government Administration Council (equivalent to a cabinet, or council of ministers) they held two out of five vice-premierships and about two-fifths of the ministerial portfolios, the latter limited however to posts of lesser importance. As for the military structure, the



THE PARTY VIEW

A Communist cartoon pictures a "rightist" carrying a flag of surrender captioned "insincere confessions," while behind his back he hides "anti-party" weapons.

—From Hsin Kuan Cha (New Observer), Peiping, October 1, 1957.

[14] Max Perleberg, *Who's Who in Modern China,* Hong Kong, 1954, pp. 309-13. (In addition, three other parties—the Non-Party Democrats, the Chinese People's National Salvation Association, and the Three People's Principles Comrades Association—were originally included in the united front, but have disappeared since 1949; occasional attempts to revive them have been quashed by the CPC.)

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ratio of non-Communists on the People's Revolutionary Military Council, the highest defense organ, was considerably smaller: only one out of seven vice-chairmen, and six out of 20 ordinary members.[15]

The reorganization of the governmental structure accompanying the adoption of the 1954 constitution did not appreciably alter the non-Communist representation. On the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, which superseded the old CPGC, seven out of 12 vice-chairmen have been non-Communists. In the State Council (cabinet), there have no longer been any non-Communist vice-premiers, but the proportion of non-Communist ministers has remained approximately the same as before 1954 (that is, at least up till February 1958). On the National Defense Council, which replaced the People's Revolutionary Military Council, four out of 15 vice-chairmen and 26 out of 81 members were non-Communists until the recent elimination of Lung Yün and Huang Ch'i-hsiang as alleged "rightists"; at present the non-Communist representation is one less in each category.

Mention should also be made of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), established in 1949 and theoretically the representative organ proper of the united front. It consists of hand-picked delegates from the CPC, the democratic parties, the armed forces, mass organizations, overseas Chinese, national minorities, cultural and vocational groups, and geographical constituencies.[16] For all its broadly representative character, however, the CPPCC has little real authority, serving mainly as just another forum at which the CPC expounds its policies and the other elements are given the "opportunity" to voice their approval.

APART FROM the primary propaganda benefit which accrues to the Communists from the mere existence of the minor parties as a testimonial to the "genuineness" of the united front, these parties also serve the CPC as active propagandist and policy-implementation agencies. In 1949-50, all of them adopted platforms pledging support of the policies and objectives of the CPC, and their subsequent actions have clearly indicated that they are not allowed to have any programs or goals except those of an implementary character. They hold periodic national congresses whose principal business is to adopt suitably enthusiastic resolutions endorsing the CPC's current programs, policies, or propaganda themes—such as domestic economic drives or plans, the "germ warfare" charges of the Korean war period, and "liberation" of Taiwan.

Such support is of particular value in cases where the CPC policy in question is actually detrimental to the very classes or groups which the minor parties represent. On October 1, 1955, for example, minor party spokesmen publicly hailed the CPC's recently-launched program of accelerated "transition to socialism," despite the fact that this involved stripping the national bourgeoisie of its remaining privileges and economic base.[17] Another case in point was the action of the minor parties in joining the 1955 campaign of denunciation against the writer, Hu Feng, in spite of its unhappy implications for non-Communist intellectuals so heavily represented in their own ranks.

The "Rectification" Campaign

Hopes that the democratic parties might achieve something more than a mere puppet role received some stimulus with the CPC's inauguration, in the spring of 1956, of a modest "destalinization" program in keeping with the atmosphere generated by the Twentieth CPSU Congress. Promises of more liberal treatment were made to workers, peasants, businessmen, and especially to intellectuals whom the CPC, in accordance with Mao's new "hundred flowers" policy, invited to "bloom and contend," that is, to speak their minds on public affairs provided their utterances did not conflict with "the consolidation of the people's regime."[18]

The older intellectuals, however, remained discreetly silent, presumably because they were not certain of the Communists' sincerity and of how far they could safely go. The students, on the other hand, were less restrained: many took part in strikes and demonstrations of protest against rigid discipline, inadequate educational facilities, and bad living conditions. The minor parties, for their part, began to nourish ideas of expanding their followings and acquiring the mass base hitherto denied them; but it is extremely unlikely that any of their leaders seriously hoped to challenge the supremacy of the CPC, as the regime later charged.

The Polish and Hungarian crises in the autumn of 1956 intensified the ferment in Communist China. At first, the CPC seemed inclined to pull back from its slightly liberalized policies, but in the end the party leadership evidently decided that it would be wiser to

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 300, 302.

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 292-5.

[17] *Cf.* Peter S. H. Tang, *Communist China Today,* F. A. Praeger. New York, 1957, pp. 147-8.

[18] Speech by Lu Ting-yi (May 26, 1956), published in Jen-min *jih-pao,* June 13, 1956.

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adhere to the "hundred flowers" principle and encourage the public to air its grievances in the open, thus providing a safety-valve for letting off pent-up steam. Such a public debate, the leaders calculated, could also be useful as the starting-point for a new "rectification" campaign within the CPC itself, for the purpose of correcting deficiencies in the party's "working methods." Since the last rectification drive in 1942, the party had grown enormously (to about 11,000,000 members) and, by Liu Shao-ch'i's own admission at the Eighth Party Congress, contained many insufficiently indoctrinated individuals.[19]

To induce the still reticent intellectuals to speak up, however, a further initiative by the CPC was obviously required. It came in the form of Mao's major speech of February 27, 1957, in which, among other things, he stated that "contradictions" (conflicts of interest or opinion capable of being resolved through accommodation) are inevitable and even desirable in a socialist society as long as they are prevented, by means of open public discussion, from worsening into "antagonisms" soluble only by conflict. (The contents of the speech, delivered at a Supreme State Conference, were generally known among high-level CPC, government, and democratic party officials, although not officially published until June.) A few days after Mao's pronouncement, the CPC announced plans for the staging of a nationwide rectification campaign.[20]

EVEN MAO'S SPEECH brought forth no noteworthy signs of "blooming and contending" from those minor party leaders who were aware of it. At a session of the Standing Committee of the CPPCC (March 5-20), nothing but the usual platitudes came from the non-Communist representatives: even Chang Po-chün, a leading democratic politician and government minister, later to be purged as an "arch-rightist," said nothing to which the CPC could have objected. Only after still further prodding, notably the publication of an editorial in the central party organ summarizing the gist of Mao's February 27 speech,[21] and an encouraging speech by P'eng Chen, member of the CPC Politburo,[22] did the minor party members and intellectuals generally begin to speak their minds more frankly.

The major developments occurred at a forum of prominent minor party members and non-party individuals, staged by the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee between May 8 and June 3. In contrast to his earlier reticence, Chang Po-chün now complained that the CPC dominated the government so completely that non-Communist officials had difficulty exercising any authority or obtaining promotion; he further criticized the practice of burdening non-Communist officials with so many concurrent functions that they could handle none of them properly. Chang Nai-ch'i, of the Democratic National Construction Association, condemned the "sectarianism" and "dogmatism" of many CPC members and denied the party's contention that the bourgeoisie needed intensive ideological remolding.[23] Lo Lung-chi, of the China Democratic League and also a cabinet minister, criticized the CPC for pushing too rapidly toward socialism and for excessive severity in dealing with suspected "counterrevolutionaries."[24] A later report credited him with disclosing, and protesting against, the CPC's practice of planting secret as well as admitted Communists in the minor parties.[25] Other spokesmen questioned the genuineness of the CPC's professed policy of "co-existence" with the democratic parties, claiming that "co-existence" implied a reasonable degree of equality, not complete Communist domination.[26]

The "Anti-Rightist Struggle"

Curiously enough, the CPC kept silent throughout May, allowing the criticisms to be reported in the press without any evident restriction. Later, it claimed that its initial restraint had been deliberate, that it had fully anticipated what the critics would say and was merely trying to draw them out.[27] This seems highly unlikely in view of the fact that the criticisms of the minor party leaders were such as virtually to destroy the CPC's sedulously cultivated myth of the united front. It appears far more probable that the Communist leadership was taken by surprise and was momentarily divided over how to deal with the situation. In the end, it decided that the criticisms constituted a threat to its leadership too serious to be tolerated, and that the critics must be put down sternly, even at the cost of further underlining the falsity of the united front.

[19] NCNA, Peiping, September 16, 1956.
[20] Peiping Radio (Home Service), March 4, 1957.
[21] "How to Deal Correctly with Contradictions Within the Ranks of the People," *Jen-min jih-pao,* April 13, 1957.
[22] NCNA, Peiping, April 22, 1957.
[23] NCNA, Peiping, May 8, 1957.
[24] NCNA, Peiping, May 22, 1957.
[25] Peiping Radio (Home Service), June 25, 1957.
[26] *E.g.,* statement by Yen Hsin-min (China Peasants and Workers Democratic Party), reported by NCNA, Peiping, May 13, 1957.
[27] "The Scheming by Chinese Bourgeois Rightists," editorial in *Jen-min jih-pao,* July 1, 1957.

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Early in June the party launched a furious offensive against its critics, now labeled as "rightists" seeking to overthrow the CPC and socialism. Soon thereafter, on June 18, Mao's speech of February 27 was at last published, turning out to contain the proviso that criticism, to be admissible, must satisfy six criteria, of which the most important was that it must not weaken the leadership of the CPC or challenge the validity of its chosen "path to socialism."[28] (The fact that the *Jen-min jih-pao* editorial of April 13 summarizing Mao's original speech had made no mention of these criteria strongly suggests that they were a later addition to the finally published version. Had they been in the original, it also seems probable that the critics would have been far more circumspect.)

Although it was still doubtful, at least on the basis of the criticisms reported prior to the start of the "anti-rightist" campaign, that the critics had violated Mao's six criteria, the CPC strongly insisted that they had. In any event, to clinch the case against them, the party press now credited them with having assailed the CPC in much more violent terms than had been reported at the time. During the succeeding weeks, the "rightists" were vehemently denounced at "spontaneous" public meetings, especially at "struggle" meetings staged by their own professional groups, minor party organizations, and (where appropriate) by their fellow delegates to the National People's Congress, which began its annual session on June 26. Subjected to intense psychological pressure, most of the accused soon began to make public "confessions" and at least partial retractions. This evidently saved them from physical punishment, although the threat of possible criminal action against them was implicit in a *Jen-min jih-pao* editorial of September 15, 1957, which labeled the "rightists" as "reactionaries"—just one step short of the criminal category of "counter-revolutionaries."

Most, if not all, of the accused "rightists" in the democratic parties have since been removed from their party posts as well as their positions in the government and various public organizations. The three central figures in the alleged "conspiracy" against the party—

[28] Mao's speech, "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People," as reported by NCNA, Peiping, June 18, 1957.

CHINESE COMMUNIST LOGIC

The "Legitimate Interest" of the Bourgeoisie—Self-Liquidation

Since the various democratic parties and groups are the political representatives of the bourgeoisie and the upper petty bourgeoisie, it is proper that during the stage of socialist transformation they should be permitted to represent the legitimate interests of these classes and strata. Of course, in general, the interests of the bourgeoisie lie in the realization of capitalism and in seeking maximum possible profits. But in China, where the Chinese Communist Party has led the people of the whole country in winning the victory of the new democratic revolution, the common aspiration of the whole people is the realization of socialism and not pursuing the road of capitalism. This is in keeping with the law of social development and has been laid down in the constitution. Agreement to it has also been expressed by the political representatives of the bourgeoisie (mainly the democratic parties and groups). Accordingly, the democratic parties and groups in China, as representatives of the bourgeoisie and upper petty bourgeoisie, represent only that side which is in keeping with the law of development of Chinese society, and not the side which violates that law. They therefore have the obligation to carry on education and struggle against the dark side of the dual nature of the Chinese national bourgeoisie, the side that continues to hope for exploitation and the realization of capitalism. . . . They should persuade the bourgeoisie to accept peaceful transformation. . . .

The concrete problems of realizing this policy call for consultation with democratic parties and groups which represent the legitimate interests of the bourgeoisie. . . . The regulation and guarantee of these interests will consolidate the people's democratic united front (preventing its splitting up) and promote its development (the elimination of the bourgeoisie).

—From Chang Chih-yi, "On the Policy of 'Long-term Coexistence and Mutual Supervision'," Hsueh Hsi (Study), Peiping, January 18, 1958.

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Chang Po-chün, Chang Nai-ch'i, and Lo Lung-chi—were dismissed from their ministerial posts in a reorganization of the cabinet approved by the National People's Congress at its February 1958 session. Chang Po-chün's successor as Minister of Communications is a Communist, Wang Shou-tao, but the Ministry of Food (formerly under Chang Nai-ch'i) and the Ministry of Timber Industry (formerly under Lo, but now merged with the Ministry of Forestry) remain headed by non-Communists. The proportion of non-Communist ministers in the State Council has thus been only slightly reduced, though their influence has probably suffered much more as a consequence of the intimidation brought to bear by the anti-rightist struggle.

In addition to the cabinet changes, some 50 "rightists" were deprived of their seats in the National People's Congress in February,[29] and about 20, including the three "rightist" ex-ministers, were subsequently suspended from the CPPCC.[30] The editorial staffs of *Kwang--ming jih-pao* and *Wen Hui Pao,* both newspapers regarded as representing the viewpoint of the minor parties, have been "reorganized" to rid them of "rightist" tendencies. Finally, many of the "rightists," though not formally sentenced to forced labor, have been constrained to take up manual jobs in the countryside as a means of imbibing the socialist viewpoint.

Future Role of the United Front

If the Chinese Communists have treated the "rightists" with something less than Stalinist severity, they have nonetheless effectually crushed them. This is by no means pure gain, however, since the minor parties now stand branded unmistakably as puppets, and the united front as a fraud. Still, the CPC continues to give every indication of attempting to preserve the myth. It takes the line that, although the minor parties are basically "bourgeois" in character and outlook and thus need to undergo extensive "socialist remolding," the principle of "long-term co-existence and mutual supervision" will continue to govern the CPC's relations with them.[31]

For their own part, the minor parties have recently given ample evidence that they have learned their lesson. The month of March witnessed a series of large-scale demonstration meetings at which minor party spokesmen pledged themselves to transform their bourgeois viewpoints into that of socialism as speedily as possible, some even mentioning a time-limit of three years. These demonstrations culminated on March 16 in a huge joint rally of all the minor party organizations, which formally adopted a "charter for the socialist self-remolding of the democratic parties and non-party democrats." The charter proclaimed the following as the democratic parties' goals:

To reform their political standpoint, devotedly and resolutely taking the path of socialism under the leadership of the Communist Party; to be loyal to the socialist system, faithfully carrying out the state's policies and laws, and wholeheartedly contributing their knowledge and strength to the nation's construction; to study from the workers and peasants through practical work, establishing a proper attitude toward physical labor and actively developing the ideology and sentiments possessed by the working people; to study Marxism-Leninism and the advanced experience and technique of the Soviet Union; to carry through the policy of letting the hundred flowers bloom, the hundred schools of thought contend; to accelerate self-education to provide conditions for long term co-existence and mutual supervision, and firmly to carry out the united front policy in the service of socialism.[32]

Evidently these fulsome promises satisfied the CPC's demands, for *Jen-min jih-pao,* in an editorial the next day (March 17), hailed the "determination" of the minor parties, and of the bourgeoisie which they represent, to remold themselves and to take a more active part in the "socialist leap forward." The party organ strongly implied that they had no other alternative since "the economic base of the bourgeoisie is, in the main, extinct." There was also as much of a veiled threat as an expression of approval in the paper's remark that "some of the bourgeois intellectuals have recently been transferred to work in factories and in the countryside together with workers and peasants."

Thus, the united front is to be preserved, but on terms somewhat different from any the CPC ever saw fit to lay down publicly prior to 1957. Without explicity admitting as much, the CPC has, in effect, altered the major function of the united front. Instead of representing (among other classes) the Chinese bourgeoisie, it is now designed to eliminate the bourgeoisie by remolding" it ideologically into a segment of the proletariat. The crushing of trouble-makers by means of the anti-rightist struggle will undoubtedly serve to make the united front function more smoothly. As a propaganda device, however, it has largely been stripped of its usefulness and power to deceive.

[29] NCNA, Peiping, February 1, 1958.

[30] NCNA, Peiping, March 17, 1958.

[31] This line was voiced by Teng Hsiao-ping at a plenary session of the CPC Central Committee on September 23, 1957 (reported by NCNA, Peiping, October 18) and again by Li Wei-han, director of the CPC Central Committee's United Front Work Department (NCNA, Peiping, November 16, 1957).

[32] NCNA, Peiping, March 16, 1958.

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Communist Betrayal in Spain

David T. Cattell:
Soviet Diplomacy and the Spanish Civil War
University of California Press,
Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1957.

Luigi Longo (Gallo):
Le Brigate Internazionali in Spagna
(The International Brigades in Spain),
Editori Ruiniti, Rome, 1956.

Reviewed by Victor Alba

TODAY, NINETEEN YEARS after its conclusion, the Spanish Civil War has lost its topical interest for newspapers and magazines. But no book appears on any aspect of that war which is not instructive. This is because the Spanish Civil War contained all the political factors and attitudes which continue to operate on the international scene today. More than any other international event of this century, it is a valuable touchstone for measuring the motives, sincerity and diplomatic perspicacity of the various powers involved in it.

The only obstacle to profiting from its lessons is that it is almost impossible to reconstruct certain areas of its history. Any history of the diplomacy of the Spanish Civil War must display one basic defect: an absence of information on decisive events which were kept secret at the time, and for which there are no documents available now. Because many of the participants in these events are dead or have vanished, there is the danger that posterity will be left with a distorted, or at least an incomplete, picture of the diplomacy of the Spanish Civil War.

Virtually the only documents on the Spanish Civil War available to the historian are those of the Non-Intervention Committee and of the League of Nations. Certainly the Committee had no effect on the course of the war, nor was it close to the real centers of decision making. It was only a dubious cloak of respectability for a group of nations suffering from an anxiety neurosis: European democracy's fear of nazism. Therefore, Cattell's book, which must rely on these documents, is unavoidably incomplete on the more controversial and decisive points of his topic.

For example, he can say nothing about the conversations the Soviet representatives in Spain held with Dr. Juan Negrin, head of the Spanish Republican Government at that time, and with General Vicente Rojo, Chief of the Republican General Staff. In 1938 the Soviets forced on these two men the campaign known as the "Battle of the Ebro," which practically finished off the Republican Army, and opened the road to Barcelona and victory to General Franco's army and the German and Italian forces.

Nor can he say anything about Hitler's offer in 1938 to withdraw his forces (which would have meant victory for the Republic), in exchange for a guarantee that, in the event of a generalized war, Spain would remain neutral and not permit transit to French forces on their way from North Africa to metropolitan France. Nothing is even known of the reasons why Dr. Negrin, to whom the proposal was made, postponed his reply, although there are reports that Soviet diplomats in Spain exerted all their influence to have the Fuehrer's offer rejected.

Nor has anything been written—except for a few fleeting allusions by Luis de Araquistain [1]—about the attempted negotiations in 1937 between the Republican Government and the Germans and Italians to terminate the latter's aid to France. Araquistain states that the

Mr. Alba, a Spanish journalist now residing in the United States, authored Historie des Républiques Espagnoles *(Paris, 1948) and* Insomnie Espagnole *(Paris, 1946). His area of specialization includes Latin American as well as Spanish affairs.*

[1] Luis Araquistain, "La Intervencion de Rusia en España" (Russia's Intervention in Spain), *Cuadernos del Congreso por la libertad de la Cultura,* Paris, No. 29 (March-April), 1958, pp. 60-61. Araquistain was the Spanish Republican ambassador to Berlin and Paris.

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Largo Caballero government fell in 1937 because the Soviet diplomats held Caballero responsible for these diplomatic feelers, which Araquistain himself characterizes as "viable."

Perhaps when it becomes possible to examine the files or unpublished memoirs of the leaders of that time, and when the archives in Madrid are opened up, historians will find proof of facts now suggested only by hints, but hints strong enough to make the facts appear unquestionable. The absence of these sources of information is what prevents Cattell's book from fully demonstrating its great lesson: the contrast between the *official* and the *real* attitude of Soviet diplomacy during the Spanish Civil War.

THE OFFICIAL ATTITUDE is clear: on August 6, 1936 the USSR "subscribed to the principle of noninterference in the affairs of Spain." It accepted this principle on condition that the German, Italian and Portuguese governments would also be bound by it; and it joined the Non-Intervention Committee. As a member of the Committee, the USSR always took an unambiguous position on the rigorous application of all the measures for nonintervention, control, withdrawal of "volunteers," *etc.* In this respect the Soviet position was much less vacillating than that of the British and French, and lent itself less to the accusation of being weak, timorous, or of having ulterior motives. But its *real* position was very different. It has been given very little analysis, and only those with a special interest in the subject know it. Therefore, the legend persists that Moscow's official position was its only position.

The truth is that the Soviet government, as Cattell points out, "did not decide to intervene immediately in Spain, and during the first months of the Civil War maintained official neutrality." One of the reasons for this, he explains, was that Spain was of no strategic value to the USSR for the protection of its frontiers. But the time came when Moscow was no longer content merely to use the Spanish war as a theme in its anti-Fascist propaganda. The moment was November 1936, after it had become too late for the legitimate Spanish government to put down the military uprising without a long war. And it coincided with two events: increased shipments of German armaments to the rebel forces, and the transfer to the USSR, on deposit, of 519 tons of gold belonging to the Spanish state. Araquistain writes:

When the Western powers set up the Non-Intervention Committee and prohibited the sale of arms to combatant groups, the war opened up unexpected vistas to the Soviet Union. What Italy and Germany were doing with the insurgents, that is, selling them arms with the knowledge of the Non-Intervention Committee, Russia could also do with the Spanish Republicans. The Russians, like the Germans in particular, began to see a business possibility in the war in Spain.[2]

Perhaps the business incentive alone would not have been enough to cause the Soviet Union to abandon its neutrality. However, there were more compelling reasons: the desire to see Germany expend as many of its arms and men in Spain as possible (as long as Hitler was busy in Spain, it was less likely he would turn to the East); the desire to test new Soviet weapons, especially airplanes and tanks; and, later, Moscow's desire to use Spain as a pawn in preliminary diplomatic maneuvers looking toward the negotiations that eventually produced the Nazi-Soviet Pact. It is more than coincidence that at the very moment when Moscow appears to have begun calculating on such a pact, the Soviet military advisors in Spain began urging upon the Republicans actions which they knew would lead to disaster. How could Moscow exploit the Spanish war to prove to Hitler that it wished him no harm? A triumphant republican Spain would not have remained neutral in a European war. But a victory for the "nationalists" would be a guarantee of Spanish neutrality for Hitler, and perhaps the promise of an ally. Moscow facilitated this victory, making of Republican Spain the propitiatory victim of the future friendship between Stalin and the Fuehrer.

The seizures of the Sudetenland and Austria demonstrated to Stalin that the Spanish war would not keep Hitler away from Soviet frontiers, and Franco-British indecision led him to conclude that in the event of German aggression the USSR could expect the same solitary fate as Spain. He ordered soundings to be taken for an agreement with Hitler. Spain was the proof of his "goodwill." He provoked the Battle of the Ebro and had Dr. Negrin order the unilateral withdrawal of the international volunteers from Republican ranks. That is, Stalin ordered measures which would destroy continued Republican resistance.

THE FACT THAT the Soviet Union wanted to keep the cost of its aid within the limits of the amount of Spanish gold it was holding is one reason why Soviet aid was on a much smaller scale than that of Hitler and Mussolini. Alvarez del Vayo, the Spanish Republican Minister of Foreign Affairs, who cannot be suspected of anti-Soviet sentiments, unintentionally supplies some revealing figures. In mid-1938 the arms ratio for the two camps was as follows: medium artillery, Republicans 1, Franquistas,

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

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8-10; light artillery, 1 to 5-6; aircraft, 1 to 8-10. During the Battle of the Ebro the ratio was: medium artillery, Republicans 1, Franquistas, 12-15; light artillery, 1 to 7-10; aircraft, 1 to 10-15; tanks, 1 to 30.[3]

Meanwhile, in the Non-Intervention Committee and in the League of Nations, the Soviet Union maintained its official diplomatic position with an eye toward propaganda. In March 1939, the Communists, with the agreement of Dr. Negrin, carried out a *coup d'etat* in south central Spain. The purpose was to continue a hopeless war, and drown in blood—now useless—any suspicion by the public of the double dealing of the USSR and the Communists in the Spanish Civil War.[4] Cattell's book permits one to trace the official Soviet diplomatic position in Spain and to compare it with actual Soviet behavior, thus throwing into bold relief the picture of duplicity. The lesson for the present time is clear, and Cattell's book is useful for current policy makers. It also proves that "nonintervention" is a fiction as long as those who accept it verbally are ready, like Germany, Italy and Russia, to violate it in practice. The nonintervention of Britain and France in this case was not at all an "inactive" role: it permitted the victory of the forces supported by Hitler and Mussolini, and covertly by Stalin.

THE SOVIET UNION was able to carry out its real diplomacy in Spain because it could use its aid as a means of blackmailing the Republicans. One form of this aid was the presence in Spain of the International Brigades.

Little has been written about the International Brigades, and what has been written has almost always been false. The number of volunteers (and these certainly were always true volunteers) in the Republican ranks did not exceed 13,000.[5] Communists were a minority in this group; a large part of them consisted of Communist sympathizers; and another large part were non-Communists and even anti-Communists. But the political and military leadership had to be surrendered into the hands of the Communists as the price for Soviet aid.

The latest contribution to the history of the international brigades is a book by Luigi Longo, the Italian Communist leader known in Spain during the war as "Gallo" (Cock). He, Marty, and di Vittorio were responsible for the immediate political command of the brigades. Longo states that he wrote the book in 1939, after he had left Spain, and used the brigade files which were in his charge (Page IX). Actually, the book could just as well have been written by any half-informed on-the-scene newspaper man. Longo devotes a lot of space to the heroic anecdote, to military detail, and some to political considerations—always following the official Communist version of events. He has absolutely nothing to say on the political history of the brigades during the first year of their existence (from the defense of Madrid to the battle of Brunete), the only period, in fact, which his book covers. Let us state in passing that Longo performs the prodigious miracle of writing over 400 pages about the international brigades with a mere single mention of Marty's name. (Marty had already been expelled from the French Communist Party when the book was published in Italy.) Nor does Longo speak of the execution of deviationist Communists or anti-Communists who were members of the brigades.

For the historian Longo's book will have only a morbid psychological interest. He tries to exaggerate the military role of the brigades (whose heroism and effectiveness need no propagandistic inflation), obviously in order to present the Communists as the initiators of Spanish Republican resistance. But although the book has no documentary value, its appearance is significant. Why, just now, after so many years, should Longo, in the midst of intense political activity, publish a work of this kind? The answer lies in the book's emphasis on the military aspects of the international brigades. At a time when "local wars" are being spoken of, with Soviet diplomacy seeking to foment situations like that in Spain in 1936-39, this book tells those inclined to listen to Soviet promises: "In Spain we did not abandon those who listened to us. Nowhere will we abandon them."

The book has another aim besides this: to attempt to erase the conviction, everyday more widespread, that Moscow, consciously and with premeditation, sacrificed Republican Spain. Longo's book is, in its way, proof that truth prevails despite false propaganda. For the very things which he does not say clamor for attention, and his silence confirms what Cattell exposes in his book.

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[3] Julio Alvarez del Vayo, *Freedom's Battle*, New York, 1940, p. 190.

[4] Jesus Hernandez, Communist Minister of Education under Dr. Negrin, in his book *Yo fui un Ministro de Stalin* (I was Minister for Stalin), Mexico, 1953, gives some interesting details on the Soviet influence upon Republican military and political leaders to launch the Battle of the Ebro. Of course, the Soviet Union's real attitude went unnoticed by most of the Communists, including many Spanish leaders, at least until they left Spain and were able to obtain objective information.

[5] On January 19, 1939, when Barcelona was about to fall to the Moorish and Italian forces that occupied the city for General Franco, the international committee of the League of Nations informed the League's Council that it had counted 12,673 foreign combatants in the two Republican zones, 6,490 of whom had already left spain (Cattell, pp. 125-26).

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Ideology and Power Politics: Authors' Comments

EDITORS' NOTE: The last issue of *Problems of Communism* carried a symposium on the respective roles of ideology and power-politics in Soviet policy-determination. Below, we offer Mr. Hunt's comments on Mr. Sharp's criticisms of his article; Mr. Sharp's rebuttal and reply to Mr. Lowenthal's strictures; and Mr. Lowenthal's rebuttal. The forthcoming issue will carry readers' comments.

FORM AND FUNCTION . . .

It seems to me important to distinguish between the *function* of the Soviet ideology and the peculiar *form* it has assumed. In the last analysis, its *function* is to provide a rationalization of the one-party system of government and of the policies to which the Soviet rulers are committed. The doctrine of the party is thus its central theme, and to this are related all its other elements, "proletarian democracy," "proletarian internationalism," "capitalist encirclement," "socialist realism," *etc.* On the other hand, the *form* it has taken derives primarily from Marxism with its insistence upon conflict as the mainspring of history and the force behind all progress within society—a conflict which is teleological and can only end in one way. The division of the world into two antagonistic camps, the one "progressive" and the other "reactionary," and the belief that the victory of the former, as represented by the Soviet Union, is predestined by the logic of history, is simply the Marxist class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat projected onto the international plane, and it constitutes the basis of all Soviet political thinking. It has led the Soviet rulers to take so distorted a view of the world as to make it harder to deal with them than with any government in the annals of diplomacy; and this, as Mr. Lowenthal says, is just what may be expected from an "ideology" in the sense in which Marx originally used the term.

Professor Sharp argues that Soviet national interests alone count, though his definition of these interests is tautological, as Mr. Lowenthal rightly points out. Yet to take a single example: if the Soviet rulers had consulted their national interests only, how are we to explain their strenuous efforts to promote revolution in China during the 1920's, that is, at a time when their country was weak, and was seeking to strengthen its position by entering into trade agreements and diplomatic relations with the Western powers? Such zeal for the welfare of the Chinese masses is intelligible only on the assumption that the rulers believed that they had a mission to spread the revolution wherever there was a chance of doing so effectively. Lenin had repeatedly declared this to be a primary obligation before he seized power—that is, before there was any question of promoting national interests—while after the revolution he never said a word to suggest that there was any connection between the two.

Naturally, the concepts of an ideology have to be translated into action, and when this action is undertaken by a powerful country such as Russia has now become, it can be plausibly represented as *Realpolitik*. Yet it does not follow that it belongs solely, or even primarily, to this category, or that we can afford to ignore the principles of which it claims to be the expression. The objection to such agreements as that of Yalta is precisely that they failed to take this into account, and assumed that any conflicts which might later arise with the Russians would be of a political nature only.

Further, it is not easy to see what process of logic entitles us to assume that while the leaders of the West believe in their standard of values and seek to formulate their policies in accordance with them, the Soviet rulers neither believe in theirs nor seek to apply them. Doubtless Professor Sharp is right in saying that they proceed with caution. But this has no bearing upon the matter, as there is nothing in their ideology which requires them to act otherwise.

Finally, I would join issue with Mr. Lowenthal on one point where we disagree. Certainly Marx, who had no interest is social technology, did not develop a concept of total planning. Yet he and Engels consistently advocated the replacement of "the anarchy of social production" under capitalism by production to be carried out upon a "common plan," though who was to do the planning was not explained. Yet this was sufficient to excite the suspicion of his Anarchist opponents. Both the Anarchists and the Marxists agreed that the state must be abolished; but whereas the Anarchists held that the whole object of the revolution was to destroy it, Marx held that its object was to set up a new form of society in which the means of production would be developed in the interests of all, though once it was established, the state would "wither away." The Anarchists reasoned, however, that in any such society it would be necessary to retain some form of coercive authority, and whether it was called the state or something else was immaterial. Subsequent events were to prove how right they were.

From the early days of the revolution Lenin made clear that his objective was a nationwide planned economy, though it was left to his successor to introduce it. My contention is that if such an economy is to be introduced and made effective, the state (or the party) will have to do many unpopular things. The reason why the Soviet Union has become so powerful in so short a time is precisely because

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its rulers were able to enforce measures which would never have been tolerated under a democracy, and one of the functions of the ideology is to justify their right to act in this manner. Natually, such a policy has led to the emergence of a bureaucracy which is the virtual owner of the means of production. My criticism of Djilas is that he approves the economic objectives of communism, but objects to the state of affairs to which the attempt to realize them inevitably gives rise. He wants a ''democratic communism.'' It is a contradiction in terms.

R. N. Carew Hunt

THE POLICY PIE . . .

The differences of opinion expressed by the participants in the symposium on the roles of ideology and of power politics in Soviet policy decisions bring to mind the story about a product labeled ''rabbit pie'' which, on closer scrutiny, turns out to be not quite pure rabbit but a mixture of rabbit and horse meat, in the proportion of one horse to one rabbit. Although Mr. Lowenthal insists that I deny ''completely'' the relevance of Communist ideology to the formation of Soviet policies, or that I overlook ''completely'' the use made of foreign Communist parties by the Soviet Union, this is not so. The controversy is actually one about the proportions in which the ingredients of ideology and power politics appear in the final product, Soviet policy (especially within the area to which my original arguments were directed, namely foreign policy).

I find it difficult to pick a quarrel with Mr. Hunt since, while seeming to argue that the product is pure rabbit (ideology) he is careful at all times to leave open a gate wide enough for the horse (power politics) to be brought in. At his most specific, Mr. Hunt argues that the significance of ideology lies in that ''it makes those who profess it act in a way that they would not otherwise do,'' presumably with a frequent sacrifice of efficiency for the sake of principle. The burden of proof, of course, rests on him, and in his comments appearing in the current issue he refers to Soviet support of the nationalist revolution in China in the 1920's as obviously the result of ''zeal for the welfare of the Chinese masses'' (Mr. Hunt is ironical, I hope) or of a sense of ''mission'' to spread revolution *whenever there was a chance of doing so effectively.* This, he maintains, was a mistake from the standpoint of Soviet state interests because Russia was then seeking trade agreements and diplomatic recognition from the West. His argument, however, is debatable. The establishment of Communist regimes outside Russia, if it could be ''effectively'' achieved, would have been definitely to the advantage of the weak Soviet state under the circumstances of the time. The case of Soviet ''support'' for the Chinese revolution (''encouragement'' would be more accurate) is, of course, notorious because there was nothing ''effective'' about it: it was a case of miscalculation to be sure, but not necessarily a miscalculation caused by ideological zeal or a sense of mission. As to the effect of the policy on relations with the West, Stalin apparently was following in the footsteps of nineteenth century Tsarist foreign ministers who attempted to ''bring in the East in order to redress an unfavorable balance in the West'' (as suggested, with respect to Lenin's policies, by E. H. Carr).

Since Mr. Lowenthal agrees that ideology will effectively influence policy decisions of the Soviet leaders ''when, and only when, it expresses the needs of self-preservation of the party regime'' (and I need not remind him that those in charge of a going concern tend to identify the interests of the concern with their own continued tenure), there would be little for me to object to were it not for his previously mentioned distortions of my views, his introduction of the gratuitous compliment of ''innocence'' (hereby acknowledged as an undeserved but charming relief from the much stronger epithets collected by this writer on other occasions), and for his own excursion into the theory of international relations and recent diplomatic history which—to return the compliment—is not only innocent but presumptuous.

Mr. Lowenthal states that the doctrine of ''two camps'' was not invented by Stalin, but was ''inherent in Leninism.'' This is unhistorical. The temptation to present the world as divided into ''good'' and ''bad'' camps is as old as international conflict itself. And certainly in recent times the ''two camps'' image has been used on both sides of the dividing line; it fits admirably into a bipolarized world situation. ''At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life,'' declared President Truman in his message to Congress in March 1947, several months before the late Andrei Zhdanov came out with the first vigorous postwar reformulation of the old cliche on the Soviet side. Politics operates this side of the ultimate. The persistence of the enemy image and the drive for ''unlimited power'' may well be present in the minds of the Soviet leaders, but the history of future years will be shaped, not by this admittedly unfriendly view of the outside world, but by what the Soviet leaders are *persuaded or compelled* to do; not by their ''collective paranoia'' (a term given a completely arbitrary definition by Mr. Lowenthal), but rather by their desire for survival and appraisal of the limits of the feasible. I do not doubt that they will grasp every opportunity to press any advantages to the utmost. This makes them unpleasant and tough opponents, but not totally intractable ones. To posit a world that would be animated by general harmony were it not for a single disturber of the peace is to sacrifice all history on the altar of deceptive imagery.

Mr. Lowenthal points out the difference between the ''traditional'' and Soviet concepts of spheres of influence, ascribing the controversy over the Yalta agreements to this difference. However, there is a built-in and often deliberate vagueness in the concept of spheres of influence, and differences of interpretation are not necessarily rooted in differences of *Weltanschauung.* Examining the historical record, one will find that conflicts of interpretation have usually occurred between those who acquired a sphere of influence and those who conceded one. This is not the time and, Mr. Lowenthal will admit, not exactly the place to enter into a debate over what Yalta meant and whether the representatives of the West were on that occasion laboring under an illusion about the real nature of the Soviet Union, or rather were trying to salvage what could be salvaged in a

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situation determined by the division of military theaters. Nor is it correct to say that complete Communist control was immediately imposed throughout the Soviet sphere of influence. In at least some countries (especially Czechoslovakia, but also, to some extent, Poland and Hungary until 1947) there was the kind of fuzzy situation characteristic of an in-between area. The Soviet Union, for a variety of practical considerations, on some occasions actually seems to have curbed the enthusiasm of local Communists for a speedy transition to full control. The present writer certainly did not err on the side of optimism about the lasting nature of this halfway arrangement. It was obvious that the fuzziness could not survive the onset of the cold war; yet it is wrong to mistake one of the symptoms of the cold war for its cause.

There is no serious controversy between Mr. Lowenthal and myself with regard to recent developments in eastern Europe, except that I offer a guess while he professes to know for certain what the meaning of these developments is. Of course, the Soviet Union would like to derive advantages in its dealings with "ruling" Communist parties from the magic of ideological control. However, in this case as in others, the intentions of the Soviet leaders, or their views about what would be the optimum situation, do not exclusively determine the outcome. When they saw the need to shift relations with at least some of the countries in the Soviet sphere to a more "traditional" basis, this was done whether graciously or not. If the Soviet Union appears currently to be reassuring its ideological domination over eastern Europe, this reflects an acknowledgment by the leaders of these countries of Russia's strengthened international power position. Obviously, the Soviet Union, like any big power in a position of leadership, will try to hold together by various means the grouping over which it presides. To the extent that its leaders disregard the general rules of international relations from which no one is exempt, they will be inviting trouble and failure. There are no cut-rate worlds to be had.

Samuel L. Sharp

A DIFFERENCE IN KIND . . .

I am sorry that Professor Sharp should feel that I have distorted his position. He, in turn, has certainly mistaken my meaning if he attributes to me the view that our world would be animated by general harmony were it not for a single disturber of the peace. That view is nothing but a reflection of the Leninist dogma of the two camps, which consists precisely in the delusion of seeing all conflicts, and ultimately all independent forces, as manifestations of a single enemy. It is not unhistorical to regard this outlook as characteristic of the totalitarian movements of our time; on the contrary, it is unhistorical to confuse it with the age-old tendency to regard one's own side in a given conflict as good and the enemy as bad.

I agree with Professor Sharp on one point of great practical importance—that the Soviets are not intractable in his sense, *i.e.*, that they are tough politicians liable to be influenced by the hard facts of power and the processes for negotiation, rather than madmen pursuing a preordained plan of world conquest regardless of risk. But while Soviet policy differs from Hitler's in this vital respect, I hold that it is also different in kind from that of non-totalitarian great powers. Professor Sharp persists in seeking to blur this difference, while I wish to show that it is not confined to motives and ultimate aims, but constantly affects the Soviets' *modus operandi*.

For instance, Professor Sharp accepts my formula that Soviet ideology influences policy decisions only when it expresses the needs of self-preservation of the party regime, but adds that it is normal for any government to identify the interests of its country with its own. But my point is that the interests of a one-party government which uses an international movement as a weapon are highly peculiar, and I gave examples to show just how they affect its foreign relations. Since we wrote, the new Soviet quarrel with Yugoslavia—a quarrel which both Khrushchev and Tito would have liked to avoid for realistic reasons, but which was forced on them by Tito's need to justify ideologically his position outside the Warsaw pact, and Khrushchev's need to restore ideological unity and discipline within the bloc—has further illustrated my thesis.

Again, Professor Sharp claimed in his article that taking the entire Soviet record to date, the achievements are clearly attributable to Soviet power and diplomacy with no credit due to the international Communist movement. I find it impossible to fit into this formula the victory of communism in China, which has been to an overwhelming extent the outcome of the struggle of indigenous forces under indigenous leadership, but has resulted in a major shift in the balance of world power in favor of the Soviets. Some rabbit!

But we remain farthest apart on the Soviet conquest of Eastern Europe. In referring to Yalta, I explicitly disclaimed any intention to pass judgment on whether the Western statesmen committed an avoidable mistake of disastrous dimensions. I was concerned to show that, whether the concessions were avoidable or not, the later fate of the Soviet sphere of influence was implicit in the nature of Soviet power. Professor Sharp denies this on the ground that the "peoples' democracies" were somewhat fuzzy coalition regimes until 1947, and concludes that their later total sovietization was a symptom and not a cause of the cold war. Yet readers of this journal are familiar with the overwhelming evidence that preparations for total sovietization, such as the occupation of all key positions of power (armed forces, police, press, *etc.*), by Communists and the systematic undermining of the independence of the other parties were begun throughout the area almost from the moment of the first entry of Soviet forces. I can find no evidence to back the hypothesis that these preparations would not have been pursued to their logical conclusions if the West had acquiesced in the first steps instead of reacting to the challenge of the forcible expansion of the Soviet system, nor can I accept the implication that the cold war began only when the West took up the challenge.

Richard Lowenthal

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